# as Blair hits at schools

## Failings exaggerated, say unions

**DOUL HITIDUL** Education Editor

Teachers reacted furiously last night to claims by Tony Blair, the Labour leader, that three out of

ten schools are failing. Mr Blair made the remarks as Labour published new education policies designed to show that the party will be tougher on bad schools and teachers than the Conservatives.

Teachers said Mr Blair's figure was wrong and accused him of "teacher bashing."

While headteachers attacked Mr Blair for "a slip of gargan-tuan proportions", the Office for Standards in Education saidonly 2 per cent of schools were officially "failing" while a further 10 per cent had serious

Teachers also criticised Labour's paper on raising standards for concentrating too much on streamlining procedures to get rid of bad teachers and too little on providing more

teachers and a "fresh start" for closed and reopened with a new name, a new head and new governors. There would be national guidelines on homework profession. "But you can't in the

There is no more important issue than raising standards in our schools - particularly the 30 per

cent of schools that are falling. Britain stands 35th in the world education league. It is a disaster for British firms trying to compete abroad. And it is a tragedy for all those talented children in Britain who are not achieving their full potential. There will be zero tolerance of failure from any Government 1

David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said the figures were based on inspectors' reports and national test results.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said Mr Blair's comments were "a slip of garanuan proportions and fundamentally untrue. It doesn't help in delivering a positive mes-sage to a teaching force which is desperately in need of motivation"

Mr Blair appears to have Labour proposes a new head-teacher qualification, a new centage of unsatisfactors lessons - around 30 per cent to back his remarks

Mr Blair said there were thousands of good teachers and he hoped very much to have a constructive dialogue with the and on testing five-year-olds, Mr Blair said at the launch of are people running schools who

the paper, Excellence for All: can't do it properly. If we aren't prepared to take that on board

> Mr Hart said that teachers could not be sacked more quickly without falling foul of the Employment Protection

The Liberal Democrats said Labour had still not promised more money for schools and urged the party to join them in would lead to school cuts.

Mr Blair said: "A Labour government wants to make a ater investment in education. We have to do that depending on the state of the economy.

Asked whether Labour would pay teachers more he replied that it would depend on the circumstances and priorities.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, aid: "There is not a snowball's chance in hell of realising these plans without substantial additional expenditure."

Mr Blunkett promised "a quantum leap" to bring standards in our schools up to the level of our economic com petitors. "Our crusade is designed to offer to the many what previously was only available to the few.

Reaction, page 5 Leading article, page 18

# Teacher fury Paris's biggest protest since 1968



Strike force: Railway workers marching through smoke from emergency flares during protests in Paris (above) and Lille



Two bellboys stood in their elegant uniforms in front of a posh hotel near the Opera. clenching their fists in salute of the proletarist filing past. "The railway workers and commuters united will never be defeated." chanted 50,000 throats, straining to capture the revolt of 1995 with a catchy slogan.

unable to reciprocate the railway workers' solidarity, detained as they were by a public transport strike that has crippled trains throughout the country and caused 100-mile tailbacks along the main arteries of France, But even without them there were enough people in the centre of Paris vesterday to produce the largest demonstration yet against the government's economic programme, and cause the worst disruption in the capital since the summer of 1968.

Some 50,000 workers and students, thumping drums and swaying to the beat of Communist rap, painted the boule-vards red with their flares and banners. As Alain Juppe pre-

pared to defend his government's austerity plan at the National Assembly on the Left Bank, the other side of the Seine reverberated with shouts of "Juppe resign". Had the Prime Minister glanced across the river, he might have seen an effigy of himself dangling from a rope, or a picture showing him

halfway down a lavatory. As night fell, the casseurs, a The commuters, alas, were—fringe element always ready to exploit public protests, began overturning cars at St Lazare station and smashing shop windows on seedy Clichy boulevard. But the vast majority of the crowd were peaceful, subdued

and President Jacques Chirac

by the snow and cold winds. "We oppose the Juppé planbecause it destabilises the railways and takes away our social protection," said Fernand André, an engineer at the highspeed train maintenance depot in Villeneuve, outside Paris. Mr André, a shop steward of the Communist CGT, which formed

the bulk of the procession. seemed able to rattle off details of the plan in his sleep; 6.000km of track and 30,000 workers to be cut over five years.

"I have been working for the railways for 23 years," he said. "I work irregular hours, night shifts, and for that I take home 7,500 francs labout £1,070] a month. And new Jurpé tells me the country can't even afford that.

The government argues it needs to cut the hudget to make the economy fit for European monetary union in 1999. But this line of reasoning fell on deaf ears. "The situation of the French economy is not as had as they say," says Mr Andre, as he cites yet more statistics, "In any case, we're against Maastricht, because it exploits the workers. The workers of Europe must unite against Maastricht. he said vaguely, looking unsure

of his facts for the first time. PM talks tough, page 11 Fight for the future, page 19

## Bus company wins first rail franchise

**CHRISTIAN WOLMAR** Transport Correspondent

Rail passengers face sharp cuts in train services following the successful bid for Britain's largest railway franchise by a bus company famous for its aggreiness tactics. The Independent has learned that Roger Salmon, the fran-

chise director, has decided to award the franchise to run South West Trains to Stagecoach. Britain's largest bus company, because its bid for the line required the least annual subsidy. Stagecoach was built up over 15 years by the brother and sister team of former bus drivers Ann Gloag and Brian Souter. They started with two secondhand coaches, running a Dundee-to-London service fisaved while bus drivers. Mrs Gloag, brought up in a council house in Perth, recently attracted widespread attention by buying Beaufort Castle, former home of Lord Lovat.

Mr Salmon will announce next Tuesday that the bus company has beaten the joint bid from the management buy-out team and Compagnie Generale

IN BRIEF

A primary school in London

where children have developed

meningitis-related blood poi-

soning has been closed after

anxious parents kept their chil-

dren away from lessons.Page 7

The biggest combined police op-

eration ever carried out in

Britain saw at least £1.5m worth

of stolen property recovered

and more than 2,000 people ar-

rested in raids on 3.700 homes

Meningitis scare

Christmas cracket



des Eaux for the prestigious franchise which involves running the commuter and regional network out of Waterloo. The winning bid was based on providing nanced with £25,000 they had only the number of trains set out in Mr Salmon's minimum specification - implying a cut of 8 per cent in services.

A source close to the bidding process said that Stagecoach's bid was cheaper but still required more than the £70m per year subsidy currently being paid by Mr Salmon, who now al-locates the government's funding for the railways. However.

it was cheaper than the management buy-out team's bid because it did not include all the trains in the existing timetable. The cuts could mean first and last trains being axed and frequencies on some lines reduced sharply. Stagecoach also hopes to save money by using less rolling stock.

The fact that Mr Salmon has set "minimum passenger re-quirements" below the level of the current timetable is currently the subject of a court chal-lenge by the Save the Railways campaign due to start in the High Court tomorrow. If the challenge is successful, then Mr Salmon will have to delay the announcement of the winning bid, or even start the whole franchise process again. Stagecoach which runs sev

eral bus companies in the South West Trains area plans to run shuttle services to railheads from towns without railway sta-Critics of the company have said that its bus operations will lead to a reference to the Mo-

nopolies and Mergers Com-

Egypt has sent up to 100 men from the state security service to London to start a Europewide manhunt for dozens of Islamic fundamentalists, some of

whom are said to be in Britain.

A reliable military source in

Cairo said the agents — about 40 of whom are US-trained began to arrive in London in November as part of an operation to track down and kill the Egyptian regime's enemies abroad. A number of the agents are believed to be armed, one Egyptian source described them as "hit squads", and their pres-

British security services were told of the decision to send the agents, the last of whom is said to have arrived on 20 November. Their dispatch to Europe follows promises by the Egyptian Interior Minister to hunt down Muslim militants who intimidated by police shoot-tokill tacties, torture and death sentences at home — have pur-sued their war against Egyption

Egypt sends 'hit squad'

to target enemies in UK

diplomats abroad. An Egyptian official was murdered in Geneva last month up the Egyptian embassy in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. six days later, killing 18 people.

counterparts in Britain, but their departure from Cairowas cancelled after the Islamahad bombing. At least one Egyptian militant. Talaat Qassem of the Genta'a Islamiya — the Islamic Group — went missing in the Croatian capital of Zagreb while visiting Islamist groups in Bosnia in September. The group later accused Egypt of ab-ducting him back to Cairo.

President Hosni Mubarak has blamed Britain and Germany for offering asylum to the and a suicide car-bomber blow regime's militant opponents. warning that both countries will "pay a heavy price" for giving sanctuary to Egypt's one-

Cairo's dirty war, page 13

spokeswoman for the

trying to be positive and hones

great sentimental value".

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### mission, but the company's Another 100 Egyptian agents were due to be sent to Pakistan managers are confident that this ence in Britain is likely to cause TURN TO PAGE 2 | the government deep concern. Airborne mystery of Duchess's jewels

JOHN McKIE

Police in London and Washington were last night investigating the theft of jewellery believed to be worth £250,000, given to the Duchess of York on

her wedding day by the Queen. The diamond necklace and bracelet were taken from a suitcase belonging to the Duchess' lady-in-waiting, Jane Dunn-Butler, during a flight from New York to London.

Ms Dunn-Butler is thought to have left the suitcase in a baggage hold, from where it was taken. The Duchess discovered the theft late on Monday night after unpacking at her home in Wentworth, Berkshire.

It is not known in which country the items, believed to be royal heirlooms, were stolen but they were last seen in Washington. Washington Police were last night having "nimed the hotel upside down".

The Duchess arrived home—with her estranged husband, the—ried and kept in hand luggage, on Monday afternoon after a Duke of York, and their chil—A spokeswoman for the four-day trip to the US, where she had attended a White House reception hosted by President Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary, and attended a launch for her book Budgie the Helicopter at the New York department store, Bloomingdales.

earlier from New York on Con-

corde to attend a charity carol

concert at Southwark Cathedral

dren Beatrice and Eugenie. Duchess said: The Duchess is She had left the jewellery with Ms Dunn-Butler, who returned to get the items back. They hold to London Heathrow at 8.59pm. The Duchess had worn the missing necklace at Sunday's White House reception. The Duchess had returned

The nature of the theft has led to fears that the insurance may not be recouped. A BA

spokesman, David Wilson, said: "Valuable items should be car-

section ONE BUSINESS 20-24 COMMENT 18.19 CROSSWORD 28 GAZETTE 16 LAW REPORT 16 LEADING ARTICLES 18 LETTERS 18 NEWS 2-15 OBITUARIES 16 SHARES 23 SPORT 25-28 UNIT TRUSTS 24

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ARTS 8-10 BRIDGE 22 CROSSWORD 22 FEEDBACK 22 FINANCE 16-18 LAW 12-15 LIFE 4-7 LISTINGS 20.21 REVIEWS 10 TELEVISION & RADIO 23,24 WEATHER 21

Sporting academy takes first step A massive consultation exercise was launched yesterday as a first step to establishing the British

Academy for Sport.
The Sports Council has sent

out proposal documents and questionnaires to 10,000 British

competitors, coaches, and ad-

ministrators seeking their views

on the best way to realise the

idea, introduced by the Gov-

ernment in a policy statement "Sport: Raising The Game", and personally backed by the

Prime Minister, John Major.

Sport in Canberra is widely

seen as a model for the project which is intended to spur a "sea

change" in the development of

key question is whether there should be one big centre, as in Australia, or a network of re-

News analysis, page 17

gional centres.

Naked justice

No action is to be taken again

the television newsreader Julia Somerville and her boyfriend

Jeremy Dixon over family snap-shots of her maked child, Scot-land Yard said. Miss Somerville welcomed the decision in a statement. There has been a

deplorable invasion of my pri-vacy and that of my family."

The Australian Institute of

letter from a kin

Hindley

# Jobs axe poised over NHS managers

**NICHOLAS TIMMINS** Public Policy Editor

Up to 5,000 administrative and management jobs are to go in the NHS over the next 12 months as the Government takes the axe to some of the bureaucracy that the NHS market

The £130m to be saved will mean "more white coats and fewer grey suits", Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for

published league tables showing four to five-fold variations in how much NHS trusts spend on management. Insisting that the money would be spent on patient care, Mr Dorrell said the savings, which are required by his Budget settlement for the NHS, were "challenging but

Mergers of health and family health services authorities will reduce management spending by more than £26m next year

ing. Mr Dorrell said. In additiou, NHS trusts are being required to reduce their management costs by 5 per cent, saving just over £100m in real terms.

On top of a string of savings from slimming down the Department of Health and the NHS Executive, and abolishing regional health authorities, the move will produce a total of £300m in reduced bureaucracy by 1997 compared to the amount spent last year, Mr Dorrell said. "We are winning the war against bureaucracy. I Rheumatic Diseases. The av-regard it as jobs transferring out erage spent by trusts was 3.9 per of administrative work into patient care."

The league tables show wide variations in management spending between trusts - from 2.1 per cent of its budget by the Chelsea and Westminster hospitals and the Freeman group in Newcastle upon Tyne to a reported 10.8 per cent by the Royal London Homocopathic and 7.9 per cent spent by the Royal National Hospital for cent, but significant numbers spent 6 per cent or more.

Health authorities also show three-fold variations in management spending last year from more than £10 per head of population in Huntingdon, the Prime Minister's constituency, to £3.20 in Bristol.

The league tables come with detailed health warnings that like has to be compared with like. Some variation in man-

agement spending is acceptable. Health authorities' costs can vary as a result of dealing with more trusts, managing wide-spread change, and having a population with a high rate of turnover. Trusts also vary by type - larger trusts tending to make economies of scale - and small-

er ones tending to have pro-protionately higher costs. Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokeswoman, condemned the attack on red tape

cracy that they are now pretending to attack," she said - adding that it was fitting that John Major's health authority,

was at the bottom of the league, Noel Flannery, deputy di-rector of the Institute of Health Services Management, said his organisation agreed that management costs should be reduced. But the figures provided only "a very basic snapshot" and said nothing about the quality

## **British** Gas to review lobby strategy

CHRIS BLACKHURST stminster Correspondent

British Gas is reviewing its government relations strategy and parliamentary lobbying effort, said by industry experts to be the most extensive in the country.

Among the lobbying and public relations firms retained by British Gas are Ian Greer Associates, Lowe Bell, Public Policy Unit, Luther Pendragon and the Maitland Consultancy. Together they have been responsible for putting the be-leaguered company's message across to MPs, peers, Whitehall officials and the press. That is in addition to the company's internal, 33-strong corporate af-fairs department, headed by

director, Peter Saguinetti. This week, the Independen revealed one of the external consultants retained by British Gas, Angus Maitland of the Maitland Consultancy, had given out an anonymous document attacking Claire Spottiswoode, director-general of Ofgas.

The disclosure has led to

calls from Labour for an Office of Fair Trading inquiry and threats of legal action from United Gas, a rival of British Gas, which believes it has been the victim of similar tactics.

Mr-Sanguinetti has also shak-en-up his in-house staff, moving Neil Hayes, the company's head of media relations for three years, to oversee its international PR operation. Mr Hayes' job is currently on offer at a salary, thought to be about

Details of the review were confirmed to PR Week, the industry journal. A company spokesman said it was "looking at proposals on a range of dif-ferent issues", affecting its ex-

ter and somehow underhand

What the document, and the subsequent press coverage, did not highlight, was that the ad-dress was the home of United's companies formations solicitor, Malcolm Fontayne. He was merely complying with official filing requirements to give a home address. What

the coverage also failed to mention was that the authorities knew all along what United was doing and had given their

Cerullo censured The Advertising Standards Au-thority upheld complaints against a poster advertising campaign for rallies by the campaign for raines by the Baptist minister Morris Cerulion July claiming that he could cure infertile women and reunite broken families. One showed a boy holding crutches and a football exclaiming:

"They said I never stand on my

own two feet!" Royal ratings

The Panorama special featuring the Princess of Wales a fortnight ago won 22.77m viewers, offi-cial figures revealed — five million more than the Monday edition of Coronation Street, the second most popular programme that week.

### Cash judgement

The Government will need to commit far more money to training judges if proposed reforms to speed up archaic legal procedures are to work, warned Lord Justice Henry, chairman of the Judicial Stud-ies Board, which trains and retrains the 3,000 judges and which has had its budget more than doubled this year to £1.3m.

### Cruel-farmer

William Greenwell, 53, admitted 14 charges of neglecting more than 200 cattle and sheep at his 300 acre farm near Henfield, East Sussex. Horsham magistrates were told the RSP-CA found skeletons of animals and dying sheep and cattle sur-rounded by the rotting carcasses after he "lost his grip". Sentence was adjourned.

### Palace mail strike

Postal workers who deliver mail to Buckingham Palace and the House of Parliament have voted by more than three to one to strike next week in protest at disciplinary action taken against a colleague. The Post Office said that deliveries would be undertaken by managers.

An article on 29 November said that single mother Carol Revell's income was £8, 030 maintenance payments plus benefits. This sum in fact represents her total income. We apologise for the error.

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BACK ESSUES

## Woman in abortion case wanted child

en an abortion during a routine operation - although she had not known she was pregnant desperately wanted to start a family, she told a jury yesterday.

Doctors were also unaware that Barbara Whiten, now 38, was pregnant when she was admitted to the King's Mill Hospital, Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, in 1993 for a hysterectomy operation.

A consultant obstetrician and

gynaecologist, Reginald Dixon, 58, of Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, who performed the operation, denies unlawfully procuring a miscarriage.

When asked if she had any children, Mrs Whiten, told Nottingham Crown Court: "I would have loved to have had a baby." She said the hospital had told her she was infertile and the operation was necessary to cure her of endometriosis, a painful condition of the womb.

'It isn't a very nice thing for a woman to come to terms with - the fact that she is infertile and to find the only course of action is to have a hys-terectomy. The last thing that I thought was that I was

pregnant."
The court heard that when he discovered Mrs Whiten was pregnant. He tried to contact her husband by phone but could not reach him. He then conevitably aborting the 11-week-

Simeon Maskrey QC, for the prosecution, said: "Mr Dixon knew she was pregnant and decided to terminate the pregnancy, not because he had considered the Abortion Act or because he considered otherwise there would be grave permanent damage to her mental health, but because he thought that was what she would have wanted and he thought it was in

her best interests. 'So he had other reasons in mind but not the reasons that made the termination lawful."

Mrs Whiten told the jury that Mr Dixon spoke to her about the abortion the day after surgery. She alleged he told her he "suspected the womb was rather swollen, I suspected there was a pregnancy. I carried on because it was what you would have wanted".

Mrs Whiten said: "I couldn't believe what I was hearing. If he had come around the curtain and hit me with a sledgehammer it would have had less ef-

But Nicola Davies QC, for Mr Dixon, said that when Mrs Whiten was told about the Mr Dixon started the operation abortion: "You gave Mr Dixon a small smile and told him 'Don't worry, you did the right

## First rail franchise for bus company

will not prevent the bid from going through. The company will have three months to take over services, which means Britain's first privatised trains are likely to run on 1 April next year. The two other early franchises. Great Western Railway and London, Tilbury and Southend services are set to go to management buy out teams.

Last year, Stagecoach which owns bus firms in New Zealand, Hong Kong and Malawi - made a profit £32.6m on turnover of £338m. Shares reached a peak of 284p yester-

The company has faced over 20 investigations by the Office of Fair Trading and four inquiries by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. In August the MMC found that the company's tactics in combatting

Tourists coming to London will

soon be able to stay at County

Hall, the former home of the

defunct Greater London Coun-

cil, for as little as £10 a night. The brewing company Whit-

bread has signed a deal with Shi-

rayama Shokusan, the Japanese owners of the building on the

South Bank, to develop a 200-

room, four star Marriott hotel

and a 318-room Travel Inn

Alan Parker, managing di-

JOHN SHEPHERD

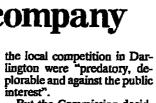
budget hotel.

plorable and against the public interest".

ed not to prevent the company operating in the area because "it would be a disservice to the people of Darlington" since other firms had been driven out of business.

The company has always de-fended itself against such criticism, saying local monopolies are necessary for the successful operation of its services. As testimony to its commitment to good service, the company points to its recent order for

l,100 new buses. bid for all 25 rail franchises.



But the Commission decid-

Stagecoach's early success means it is likely to become Britain's biggest private rail operator since it is planning to

rector of Whitbread's hotel

division, said prices at the bud-get hotel would be pitched at

just over £40 a night for a room

Staying at the Marriott, how-ever, will be more expensive. Rates at the Marriott in

Grosvenor Square start at £140

broking firms said Whitbread

had secured one of the best ho-

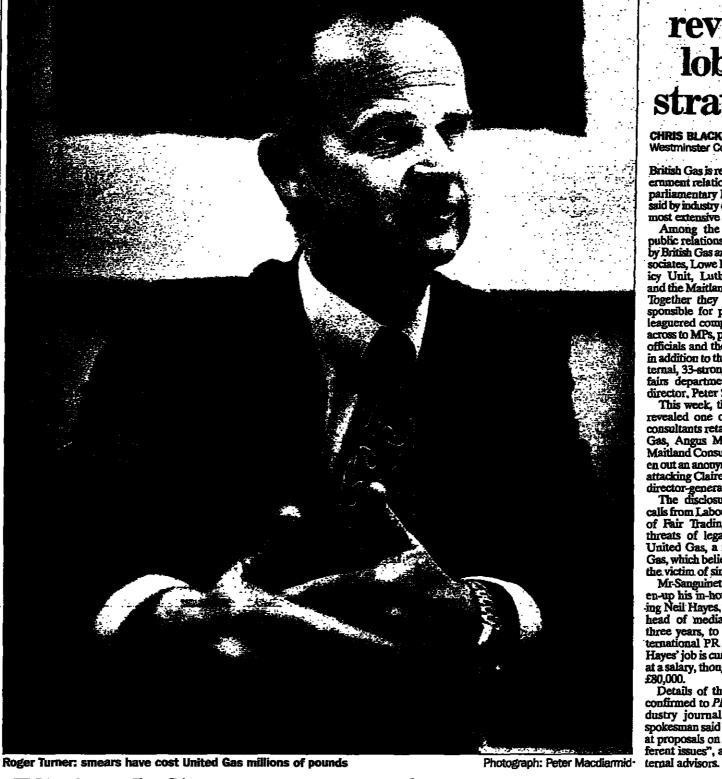
tel sites that has become avail-

able in London for years. "In

terms of location, being oppo-

Leisure analysts at City stock

sleeping up to four people.



## United Gas prepared to sue over 'smear'

dependent challengers to British Gas's traditional monopoly, is prepared to issue writs for millions of pounds against the people they believe are smearing its reputation, its director said

Sitting in his sparsely deco-rated offices close to St James's Park undergound station, London, the soberly dressed figure of Roger Turner, United's head, could not look more different

Whitbread plans hotels for County Hall

site the House of Parliament, it

couldn't be better," one said.

There was some scepticism.

however, that the deal would be

concluded. Ken Livingstone,

MP and former GLC leader,

said: "We've had three years of Shirayama announcing this and

that and nothing's happened. It's been a series of gimmicks."

hotels will be up and running in 1998, even though Mac Okamo-

Whitbread is confident the

colourful Virgin entrepreneur, pendent this week that a senior if he tried. Yet, Mr Turner and Mr Branson, as the United sultant to British Gas had handchief was quick to point out, edout an anonymous document may have a common bond. A few years ago, Mr Branson's

Virgin Atlantic airline was targeted in an infamous "dirty tricks" campaign by British Airways, its much larger rival. Now, Mr Turner firmly believes United is itself being threat-

bread deal would founder, as

did previous hotel plans with

Richard Branson's Virgin

group, he said: "Nothing is cer-

tain in this world. It is like mar-

riage. Who can stop someone who wants divorce? We have ex-

changed a contract agreement,

against United.

Asked whether the Whit- 1.2 million sq ft of space. There

Chris Blackhurst examines the background to accusations applications. It all seemed sinbusiness relationships." The external public relations consmear campaign, he said, "has cost us millions of pounds - I would love to know where it critical of Clare Spottiswoode, boss of Ofgas, the industry reg-One of the documents cir-

ulator, had forced Mr Turner to re-examine the anonymous criticisms that have been made to secure gas.

We suffered real damage." said Mr Turner, "Because of what was being said about us, we could not develop some

are also plans for shops and

County Hall has been emp-ty since Baroness Thatcher abol-

ished the GLC a decade ago.

"The fact that it's remained

empty is the scandal," Mr

Livingstone said. Shirayama, a property de

velopment company, bought the 1920s building in 1992 for £60m. Financial details of the

more leisure facilities.

culated about United detailed how the company had used a residential address in Fulham, west London, to make multiple applications for licences Ten companies owned by

United directors had made the approval.



County Half, London, would house two contrasting hotels

# WORLD ATTAS OF WINE



Whithread will occupy 360,000 sq ft of space in the north wing, and an aquarium being built in the basement by to. European director of Shideal with Whitbread, which is rayama, injected caution into Shirayama will absorb a further taking a 75-year lease, are not 200,000 of the building's total yesterday's announcement.

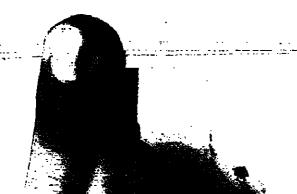
this Christmas Waterstone's can even

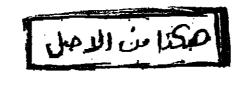
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The World Atlas of Wine, Hugh Johnson. Mitchell Beazley, hardback. rrp £30.00 now only £24.99. Food of the Sun, Alastair Little & Richard Whitnington. Quadrille; hardback. rrp £20.00 now only £14.99. Offers that speak volumes about Christmas at Waterstone's.





# Dawn raid pulls in 2,300 burglary suspects

and RICHARD SMITH

The biggest combined police operation ever carried out in-Britain saw at least £1.5m of ... also emerged as the home of an stolen property recovered in illegal factory manufacturing dawn raids on the homes the drug known as skunk of 3,700 suspected burglars

Twelve-thousand officers one-tenth of the police in England and Wales - made more than 2,300 arrests in the giant

swoop, codenamed Operation Mercia police, the offensive caught and brought to justice." Christmas Cracker.

Among the finds were a £10,000 speedboat in landlocked Kidderminster, which weed". Firearms with 20 rounds of ammunition were seized in Nottinghamshire and Hereford police were last night caring for Co-ordinated by the West

was timed to beat Christmas sprees by burglars who take advantage of rich pickings in households stocking up with presents, food and drink.

As the arrests mounted, David Blakey, West Mercia's Chief Constable, issued a warning to thieves: "You are now a prime target for police. If you continue to commit crime, you are running a greater risk than ever before that you will be

The blitz followed several weeks of talks between 40 forces and capitalised on the previous success of initiatives such as Operation Bumblebee which have made tackling burglary a priority in response to public demand. South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester,

chose to continue with existing anti-burglary operations. Mr Blakey said the aim was

Cheshire and Staffordshire

against these criminals who bring misery and to transfer fear from potential victims to the burglars themselves".

Many of those arrested, including not only suspected burglars, will be hailed by police stations and be back on the streets within hours, but strict conditions will be placed on their behaviour.

A substantial haul of heroin was found in Dorset and coun-

Wales. In Cambridgeshire, one man was arrested as a result of a DNA profile and a missing 16vear-old was found at a house in Devon and Cornwall and returned to parents. Almost 140 pirate videos and computer

found in Brentwood, Essex. Merseyside Police, which made 84 arrests, found a lockup garage in Crosby contained £37,000 of goods, including

games worth £88,000 were

to "strike a resounding blow terfeit banknotes in South the components to build a conservatory.

Two constables were injured chasing a suspect who escaped in Herifordshire and a man with a knife broke an arm and leg jumping from a third-floor window in west London. He was detained in Hillingdon Hospital.

In the capital, where 343 people were arrested at 794 addresses. Assistant Commissioner lan Johnston stressed the value of co-operation. An ear-

lier operation had found property stolen in Kent in Cornwall, for example.

news

The Prime Minister congratulated the police. "There is no doubt that over the last couple of years innovative policing methods have made a distinct impact on the level of

Last year nearly 680,000 domestic burglaries were reported in England and Wales with a 22.6 per cent detection rate.

Letter from a killer: Moors murderer writes to Independent denying she has ever been 'hand-in-hand' with Rosemary West



## We have not formed a friendship'

On 7 May 1966, the day after my own trial and conviction 2912 years ago. my name was on the front page of the Daily Mail and every other newspaper in the coun-

On 23 November 1995, my name was on the front page of the Daily Mail in massive headlines: "Hand in Hand with Hindley", "reporting" my "macabre" friendship with Rosemary West. This was the day after her trial and conviction at Gloucester.

If this article is providing some light relief and entertainment at my expense from the heaviness of the Gloucester trial, it isn't only, yet again, disseminating yet another strand of fabricated garbage to weave into myth, it is also causing acute distress to my mother and family, who had to cope with the headline horrors of following my own trial and who have had little respite

I read this nonsense more than a week ago and decided to ignore it and treat it with the contempt it deserves.

But since then it has been picked up and reported by other tabloids and repeated in the Daily Mail. I now have no option but to issue this statement tabloid editors and jourto say I will be making a for-mal complaint to the PCC nise anyway.

about the Mail in particular and the Evening Standard which copied almost word for word

the Mail's piece. I will be refuting claims that Rosemary West and myself have formed a "macabre" friendship, that we have ever held hands, prayed together in the chanel or anywhere else. cnoked snacks for each other, watched television together in each other's cells and that I sent her a "Good Luck" card before the start of the trial or at any

other time. Nor was I "fascinated" by her when she arrived on Hwing. She was on H-wing be-fore I arrived and was just one of 44 immates.

Whoever these sources" are who made these "revelations" to the Mail and other papers, it is obvious to me that they received money for this "information" and it is yet another example of cheque book journalism.

If not, it is just another opportunity to drag my name into the headlines to boost circulation, and says more about the journalists and their sources than about reality and the truth which, of course doesn't sell newspapers and which is something that

# Hindley says reports of relationship is 'nonsense'

Chief Reporter ...

the Press Complaints Commis-sion about newspaper claims have not become friends.

Independent yesterday, the tenced it said. The two most Moors murderer denied reports that she had held hands openly bisexual — have been with West, that they had prayed seen holding hands in Durham together, watched television or Prison. They were drawn to cooked meals for one another in Durham fail.

to follow her husband Frederick and commit suicide. The two
Myra Hindley is to complain to women being held yards apart

that she has developed a A front page report in the "macabre" relationship with Rosemary West in prison.

In a statement released to the Independent yesterday, the tenced it said: "The two most independent yesterday, the tenced it said: "The two most independent yesterday, the tenced it said: "The two most independent yesterday, the tenced it said: "The two most t massive headlines 'Hand in hand with Hindley', reporting my macabre' friendship with Rosemary West."

They were drawn to my macabre' friendship with Rosemary West."

Describing the report of monsense made dasuppose and adviser. They have made dasuppose and adviser. in Durham jail.

Reports of a relationship deress became West's commander and adviser. They have made unsupervised visits to each other's cell, and prayed to each other's cell, and prayed to each other in the jail chapel.

sentences on the jall's top-se-curity women's H-wing, but palled the nation.

In a hand-written statement,

cause of fears that she may try than to refute them because Nor was I fascinated by he they had been picked up and repeated by other newspapers. She wrote: "On 27 May 1966,

the day after my own trial and conviction twenty nine and a half years ago, my name was on the front page of the Daily Mail and every other newspaper in the country. On 23 November 1995, my name was on the

to write to the Press Com-plaints Commission. "I will be refuting claims that Rosemary pailed for life for the murders of 10 women and gris; including her daughter, Heather, 16, and stepdaughter, Charmaine, eight.

Both women are serving life the 31-day trial at Winchester gether in the chapel or any where else, cooked snacks for where else, cooked snacks for the start of the chapel or any where else, cooked snacks for the start of the chapel or any where else, cooked snacks for the start of the chapel or any where else, cooked snacks for the start of the chapel or any where else, cooked snacks for the start of the chapel or any the last of the start of the chapel or any the last of the start of the start of the start of the start of the chapel or any the last of the start of the sta each other, watched television together in each other's cells hospital, where Hindley said she initially dead of that I sent her a 'Good relatiouship.

Covering from a broken leg and cided to ignore the claims but Luck' card before the start of West is under 24-hour watch be now had "no option" other the trial or at any other time.

The reports are completely untrue."

when she arrived on H-wing. She was on H-wing before I arrived and was just one of 44 inmates."

Her complaint, she said, would be against the Daily Mail and the London Evening Standard, which repeated the story.
"Whoever these 'prison sources' are who made these 'revelations' to the Mail and oth-

er papers, it is obvious to me that they received money for this 'information', and it is yet another example of cheque-book journalism," she wrote.

The Home Office refused to discuss the speculation yesterday, arguing that it never com-ments on individual prisoners. But a source with access to the wing said:"When there are only 44 people in a confined space, it is inevitable that almost everyone will spend some time with everyone else at some point.

"Îm sure Hindley has spoken to West but there is no special relationship.

Another source said: "The re-

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## Rosemary's children stay loyal

Two of Rosemary West's children believe she is innocent of murder even though they suffered the violence which she inflicted on youngsters at 25 Cronwell Street, Gloncester.

Stephen West, 22, and his sister Mac, 23, describe in a television documentary to be shown tonight how they were shocked when the jury at Winchester Crown Court convicted their mother of 10 charges of murder. They also talk about the beatings and sexual abuse which characterised their upbringing.

Both say that the case could have come to light years earlier if those in authority had asked the right questions. Stephen also says that his father, Fred West, who was charged with 12 murders and who committed

Stephen describes how his suicide in prison, told him that and tied his hands to the base at one stage he came close to of a toilet where she beat him giving himself up to police. with the buckle end of a belt for giving himself up to police. with the buckle end of a belt for born of a father's."

In the BBC1 documentary, 20 minutes before accusing him father's."

Stephen Street. of stealing sex magazines.



Street in a BBC documentary tonight . Photograph: PA

mother called him home from sexually abused his older daughschool, made him strip naked ters. "He said that all fathers and tied his hands to the base broke their daughters in," she Stephen says that when he go to other friends' houses."

Mae describes how her father said, "He used to say the first born of a daughter should be the

1992 "he started saying he had been covering up stuff from all of us. He said his life began when we went to sleep at night." "I asked him what he meant but he wouldn't claborate. He said it had been going on for

on remand on sex charges in

years and went back to when he was in Scotland. He said it was a worse crime than anyone could imagine and the police would find out soon and he would never leave prison." After Fred was arrested for murder Stephen spoke to him

never tell anybody the whole truth, only what they needed to know. He said it was worse than I could imagine and he had no intention of telling everything." Both children say that they did not realise how abnormal life in the West household was. Mae explains: "We had nothing

to compare it against because

we were never really allowed to

in prison. "He told me he would

Education po

schoo

Parties 11 each of

## MP in gay libel trial told doctor he was impotent

REBECCA FOWLER

A doctor who treated the Tory MP David Ashby for depression said he was impotent, and denied he confided concern that he felt homosexual inclinations.

Dr Lewis Sevitt, a Harley Street physician, was giving evidence in Mr Ashby's libel case against the Sunday Times and Andrew Neil, the former editor. Mr Ashby denies he is a ho-

When Mr Ashby, 55, first visited Mr Sevitt's surgery in 1993, he complained of anxiety. "He was suffering from a great deal of stress," Dr Sevitt said.
"As part of that, it was clear

his interest in sex had been much diminished. He told me he had been unable to have sexual relations with his wife for four years.

Dr Sevitt said he prescribed anti-depressants in the hope it would improve Mr Ashby's condition. "I would have boped his medication would have been successful ... and his interest and ability to make love would have improved. As it was I don't think there was much change.

Ashby was concerned he was having a mid-life crisis, and experiencing homosexual feelngs, exacerbated by his wife's mosexual. "It was clear he had

financial, social and work pressures," Dr Sevitt said.

Mr Ashby denies that he had homosexual relations with Dr Ciaran Kilduff, 32, a medical doctor, who lived in the flat beneath Mr Ashby's in Putney, south-west London, after he parated from his wife in 1993.

When Dr Kilduff, also giving evidence yesterday, was asked if he had girlfriends he said yes, but he refused to comment on how intimate his relations with them had been or are now. "I don't presume to discuss my love life on public view," he said. The two men, who both deny they have been physically inti-mate, became friends when Mr Ashby met Dr Kilduff in the gar-

ing for a flat to buy. Richard Hartley QC, for the Sunday Times, asked Dr Kilduff how they struck up such a quick friendship, and ended up sitting next to each other on a flight to the United States a month later. "Didn't you think it was a bit

forward?" Mr Hartley asked. Brash, but you know what politicians are like," Dr Kilduff said. "As a doctor, my business But Dr Sevitt denied Mr is to establish a rapport with shby was concerned he was sultation. I would tend to be

quite open. Mr Ashby and Dr Kilduff allegations that he was a ho- admit they shared a double bed on a trip to France last year, a key now.'

but deny they had a homosexual relationship. Dr Kilduff also dismissed suggestions that they shared a bed on a number of occasions in Putney. "That's not true, it simply didn't hap-

pen," Dr Kilduff said. The two men travelled to porthern France in January 1994 on a carefully budgeted trip. Dr Kilduff said he did not consider it was unusual when they shared a bed on their second night to save money, although he had expected to twin

"I didn't think sharing a room with someone was something one could be found out about," he said.

On that evening, Dr Kilduff said they are dinner together den when Mr Ashby was lookand played cards in the lounge of the Chateau Tilque Hotel, and Mr Ashby retired before him. He said they did not dis-cuss which sides of the bed they wished to sleep on, and he did not recall Mr Ashry snoring that

Dr Kilduff also denied sug-gestions that he and Mr Ashby had discussed knocking their two flats into one home. Al though he said Mr Ashby had a set of keys to his flat, he said this was normal for a neighbour.

"I can't recall the first day I gave Mr Ashby the keys," Dr Kilduff said. "He certainly has



the city's traditional nativity scene in George Square. Councillors have appealed for its return

# SEASONS

# GREETINGS.

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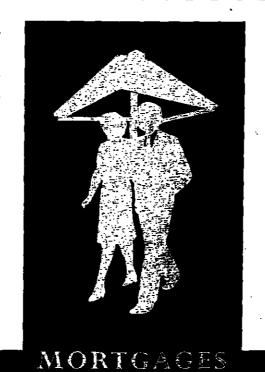
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## Banks hit for £1m by complaints watchdog

CLIFFORD GERMAN

The Banking Ombudsman awarded record damages of almost £1m against banks last year in response to complaints from the public, but the number of complaints seems to have peaked according to the ombudsman, Laurence Shurman, in his annual report yesterday.

He received 18,667 telephone calls, approximately the same as in 1994, and 6,723 written complaints, down 16 per cent on the previous year.

The number of complaints that went for investigation also dropped to 717, and of 833 actually investigated during the year, he awarded damages against the banks in 44 per cent was £10 and the largest £70,000.

mortgage lending replaced complaints about cash machines as the main concern. The policies intended to help bor- 95 per cent of the valuation. rowers pay their mortgage interest if they lost their jobs

Borrowers complain that

mortgage protection plans make policyholders wait too long before starting to pay out, and cover often lasts for only 12 months or less. In many cases they have been sold to people who are not eligible to claim, either because they are selfemployed or are working on short-term contracts, with too short a track record to qualify.

Mr Shurman also condemned banks for refusing to refund mortgage indemnity guarantee (MIG) premiums to borrowers who pay off their of the cases. The smallest award mortgages early. Borrowers who need to borrow more than Complaints connected with 75 per cent of the value of their posit book showing a l property are expected to pay a one-off premium of around 5 per cent of the excess they borombudsman condemned banks row, rising to around 8 per cent

The premium is deducted from the advance, and is used to insure the lender against losses if the property has to be repossessed and sold at a loss.

Unlike motor insurance, where part of the premium is refunded if the insurance is cancelled, banks and building societies refuse to refund MIĞ premiums, which means borrowers with MIG policies are often unable to take advantage of attractive fixed and discountrate mortgages now on offer.

Bank customers can also challenge charges for selling a repossessed property if they feel they are unreasonable, the ombudsman said, even though

charges are justified in principle. But he warned that anyone who discovers an old bank destanding credit balance should not expect a windfall. In most for overselling loan protection if they want to borrow up to balances were actually paid off.



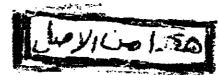
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Education policy paper: Teaching unions claim they are being used as political scapegoats in drive to raise standards

# Labour's tough line on schools 'is Tory echo'

Education Correspondent

Education ministers reacted with glee yesterday to Labour's new, tougher stance on schools, which they said echoed Conservative policies previously condemned by the Opposition. But as the party launched its drive to raise standards in schools its leadership was accused by teaching unions of us-ing schools as political

scapegoats.
Gillian Shephard, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, said Labour was belatedly adopting Tory policy.
The party had opposed government plans to introduce inspections, to close failing schools and to set up specialist schools, but now accepted all of them.

"I think it is a pity the Labour Party did not vote to support us when we introduced testing at 1, 11 and 14. But one cheer for the Labour Party for coming on board," she said.

While there was support While there was support David Hart, general secretary among the teaching profession of the National Association of the Patient Proposals on "super-teaching profession of the National Association of

- Main policy points Falling actions to be closed and respended with hew head

and governors.

Read teachers and heads to be sacked more quickly. All solvers priset targets for butter even results:
A new grade of better pair superiorder;
Compassity professional qualification for all beats.
Reacher associates from business and the professional professional

ers" who will be paid more to stay in the classroom, on smaller classes and on a new emphasis on parental responsibilities, other points were less popular.

Teachers' unions said Mr Blair's figures on failing schools were maccurate, and insisted that his claim was actually based on the proportion of poor lessons. In any case, they added, a substantial percentage were bound to be below average.

Doug McAvoy, general sec-retary of the National Union of Teachers, said most schools had nothing to fear because they were performing well: "It is cians want to introduce pro-

but suggested much of Labour's

ping boys of party politics as the

other to be seen to be tougher

on standards," he said.

main two parties vie with each

posals on the back of false claims of mass failure. Sadly, Labour has not lived up to its desite for high standards. Nigel de Gruchy, general

secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers, said that Labour had not listened hard enough to classroom teachers. Many of them were already under pressure from gov-ernment initiatives and could not implement Labour's plans without extra resources, he said.

"There are too many signs that Labour has been listening to the professors and directors of education all cavorting about paper was politically motivated.
There is a real danger that schools are becoming the whipat a safe distance from school and not enough to the 'poor bloody infantry'," he said.

Harry Greenway, Conservative MP for Ealing North and a former languages teacher, denounced plans to teach foreign languages to children from the age of seven. The simple fact is that it cannot be done because the teachers do not exist to do it. That is why this is a honourable pledge," he said.



Tough talking: Tony Blair launching his schools policy at a press conference in London yesterday Photograph: Edward Webt

## Parties match each other with policies

Labour and the Conservatives are stealing each other's educational clothes so rapidly that it is impossible to establish who

On exam and test targets for schools, testing for five-year-olds and more training for beads, they are as one. Yesterday, Labour's standards paper promised them. Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, has a standards working group look-ing at targets and has just announced more money to train tion spokesman on Education, heads Earlief this year John Major promised all five-year-olds. Shephard over homework. The guidelines for the under-fives

curriculum were in place. Both parties want bad teachers reported to heads by school. inspectors. Labour, if anything, is more strident than the Conservatives, who have not yet promised to speed up the procedure for getting rid of them.

"Poor teachers cannot, and must not, remain in teaching," the Labour paper says.

Both parties want to close bad schools and the methods that they propose are similar. The Conservatives send in a "hit squad" of education experts who can either close a bad school or sack the head, teachers and gov-ernors and help it to improve. Labour promises "a fresh start" for bad schools, which would be closed down and re-

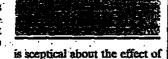
opened with a new name, new head and new governors and teachers would be asked to reapply for their jobs: "Pupils in a school that has reached rock bottom do not have the time that it can take for protracted measures to achieve results. It

is a positive alternative, therefore, to the Government's hit squad or to a closure."

Even on resources, it is not clear that there would be much more money for education under Labour. Mr Blair says only that the parties have "different processes" on how the money is a contractive." priorities" on how the money should be spent. He added that, although the party wanted to make a greater investment. in education, that would depend

on the state of the economy.

Of course, there are differences between the policies. Labour's qualification for headteachers would be compulsory. It would abolish the assistedplaces scheme, which funds private schooling for bright children from poor homes, and use the money to reduce class sizes for the youngest children to 30 or under. Mrs Shephard



class size on standards. Eabour would create a new grade of "advanced-skills teacher" to reward those who wished to stay in the classroom. This would be "a professional pace-setter called on by others because of their

teaching expertise".

David Blunkett, the opposihas stolen a march on Mrs guidelines to ensure that primary-school children do half an hour a night and secondary pupils an hour and a half.

School inspection, too, would be different under Labour with local authority inspectors involved alongside members of central teams. There would be

more advice after an inspection.
A General Teaching Council
to improve the profession's status is proposed and school funding would be reviewed. What difference would

Labour's policies make? Less than Mr Blair and Mr Blunkett would like. Experts agree that target setting, better training for heads and rewards for classroom teachers are all important

ways of raising standards.

But the paper's biggest ilaw is assuming central government. has more power than it does to influence events in the schools. Ministers cannot sack teach-

ers. Only heads and governors can. Unless the Employment Protection Act is changed - and Labour says it will stay - schools cannot sack teachers more quickly than they do now. Nine months, the figure used in the pa-per for the time it takes to sack a teacher, is an underestimate. Two years is more realistic.

Setting pupils in different subjects according to ability. which the paper favours, cannot be imposed centrally. Teaching modern languages

in primary schools will be difficult when there is already a shortage of language teachers in secondary schools. Even where change can be

imposed, Labour has to tread warily. Mr Blair talks about pressure on teachers and support for them. It is a tricky bal-ance to achieve. And yesterday pressure than support.

Judith Judd

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Defence spending: Committee calls for bias towards Europe

# MPs call for bar on American weapons

CHRIS BLACKHURST

hardware from the United States is a short-term policy that benefits only US corporations,

it was claimed by an influential group of MPs yesterday. In a hard-hitting report that fired a shot across the bows of policy advisers in the Ministry of Defence who have been leaning towards US arms manufacturers, the cross-party Commons Trade and Industry Committee recommended looking to Europe.

Coming hard on the heels of revelations about mounting cost over-runs on the Eurofighter joint-European project, and re-ports of the growing influence within the MoD of David Hart. the independent adviser to Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, the committee's report causes an embarrassment for ministers. While we believe that noth-

UK firms from collaborating with US firms where this is mutually advantageous, we regard greater European collaboration as crucial to the survival of the defence industries of the UK and other European countries." To this end, said the com-

mittee in its first study of UK defence procurement strategy: "We recommend that the UK Government takes a more prominent role in creating a European defence market involving greater collaboration at ment and company levels in R & D [research and development], production and marketing, with the aim of eliminating inappropriate duplication and subsidies."

It was essential, concluded the MPs, that the UK is a full participant in a European armaments agency proposed by France and Germany. With MoD arms buying at

present in disarray - the mining should be done to prevent defence procurement, who is ever more aggressive exporter

taking up a new post in Australia - and under severe pressure following a series of damning reports from the National Audit Office, the public spending watchdog, the committee report poses severe

problems for Mr Portillo. Recommendations like "Given the potential savings from the promotion of the European defence market, we would wish to see a more ambitious approach..." cannot be music to the ears of the avowedly Euro-sceptic Mr Portillo.

The committee's concern was prompted by a fall in Gov-ernment defence spending of 25 per cent over the past decade and pressure being put on UK suppliers by the MoD, anxious to get more value for money. Against that, companies were

also having to compete with a US industry which has seen a number of takeovers and alliances producing greater savings and economies of scale.
With the US becoming an

and countries of the former So viet Union anxious to sell weapons in return for hard currency there was a risk, MPs said, that the UK could lose markets and "as a result, significant defence manufacturing

capacity and capabilities".

It was vital, the committee said, that the Government "adopt a more active policy to secure fair access for UK firms to overseas defence markets and the removal of subsidies to foreign defence manufacturers".

The Department of Trade and Industry should be given a greater role in procurement and, "as a matter of urgency", complete a joint study with the Department of Employment into what happens to redundant workers from the defence

The findings of the inquiry, which should concentrate on the loss to Britain of highly skilled scientists and engine be reported to the House of Commons, the committee



No shelter: Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport (left), and William Hague, Secretary of State for Wales, on the Second Severn Crossing, completed yesterday. A windshield is to be built on the bridge Photograph: Christopher Jones

Heseltine says Labour intends to raise top rate to 60p in the pound

## Tax claims generate more heat than light

Michael Heseltine, the a motion setting the income tax Deputy Prime Minister, rates for 1996-97, including the esterday clanned Labour was planning a top rate of income tax of 60p in the pound as the Budget debate ended much as it began - with both sides trying to brand the other as the

"high-tax party".
"There's nothing new about the Labour Party," Mr Heseltine declared. But there was nothing new about the Deputy PM either as he offered the House a pale imitation of his Labour-bashing extravaganzas John Prescott seemed al-

ost pained that Mr Heseltine had delivered a speech "more appropriate to a circus" rather than concentrating on the serious issues of the Budget. But the Prime Minister demanded: Labour deputy took the gloves off too, dismissing Mr Heseltine as a "cheap propagandist" for the Tory party and a "has-been hop-along deputy". He found it "particularly offensive" when millionaires like Mr Heseltine

attacked people who desperately needed a minimum wage. Much of the debate revolved around the Government's claim, rather loosely put by Mr Heseltine, that the Budget "will deliver an extra £9 a week" to the average earner.

Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat economics spokesman, and Mr Prescott both seized on the figure asking if it assumed a 4 per cent average pay increase. If teachers were to get such an increase it would eat up the extra £878m the Government had promised for schools, suggested Mr Beith.

Here's the Government telling us that they have a 4 per cent pay policy," Mr Prescott said. The claim brought Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to his feet to clarify matters. The figure given by ministers

that the average family with one wage-earner and two children would be £450 better off next year was based on Treasury assumptions about earnings, in-flation and the effect of the Budget changes. "The best forecast that can be made is that next year the average family will be £9 a week better off."

Eclipsing his colleague, the Chancellor asked if £9 a week was not good enough, what changes would Labour make. This whole nonsense is based on the assumption that the Labour Party have got an opin-ion one way or the other about the changes we have made in personal taxation.

"It isn't a difficult question for the shadow Chancellor [Gordon Brown was at Mr Prescott's elbow]," Mr Clarke said. "Are they in favour of the changes we have made in personal taxation or are they against; or haven't they an idea in their head until a soundbite is suggested by Peter Mandelson?"

In a series of votes at the close of the debate, the official Labour line was to abstain on 1p reduction in the basic rate to 24p in the pound.

Labour has opposed every other reduction in income tax since 1979. But Mr Brown told the Commons that people had 'suffered enough". The Liberal Democrats opposed the cut.

Mr Heseltine's assertion that Labour was planning a higher top rate sprang from down on 2 November by the frontbencher Nigel Griffiths, Labour MP for Edinburgh what the yield would be from a 60 per cent upper rate.

To Tory cheers, the Deputy "What possible interest has a shadow Treasury spokesman of



the Parliamentary Labour Par-ty got in asking the Treasury to calculate what is the product of a 60 per cent upper rate tax band? Is it idle curiosity, or is

to help with the arithmetic?"
With Labour MPs calling out that Mr Griffiths was a trade and industry spokesman, Mr Heseltine added: "If I have revealed that I wasn't sure he was a Treasury spokesman, have I revealed something else - that there's a split within the Labour front bench between the Treasury trying to keep expenditure down and some other depart-

down and some other departmental responsibility trying to find the money to pay for increased expenditure? I don't mind which way it is.

"All I tell the people of this country: Labour is planning a 60 per cent tax rate and they're doing the calculations on that basis."

With snow falling outside the Palace of Westminster, Labour made a well-timed - if doomed - return to the issue of VAT on domestic fuel. Commending an amendment to cut the 8 per cent tax, Mr Prescott said that if the Chan-cellor really had money to spare it would have been fairer on the low-paid and pensioners to cut their heating bills. And the £30m taken off energy conservation in the Budget could have been used to provide decent jobs on schemes to insulate pensioners' homes.

"Today's weather reminds us that pensioners can't afford to turn up their heat quite so easily as we can in the House of Commons," Mr Prescott said, seemingly unconscious of the



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ans aitack

Blackling s

Judges ha Howard e

a public privites we

of pupils turned up for school yesterday as a result.

Lincolnshire: Five deaths and two

recovering. First case early October.

Three teenage pupils at the City School infected, 2 fatalities. School

closed for just under a week as more

antibiotics and throat swabs are collected. Tests reveal that four of the teenagers who died were triends and

through normal social contact. Three

caused by strain C of the bacterium

probably passed on infection

of the seven cases found to be

which there is a vaccine for, so

vaccination offered to pupils and

than 700 staff and pupils are given

Public health scare: Parents keep children away from lessons as hospital reports steep increase in incidence of illness



Meningitis hits third pupil as school closes

Health Editor

A primary school in Croyden. south London, where three children have developed meningitis-related blood poisoning, has closed temporarily after scores of ancious parents kept children at home vesterday.

In the latest in a series of outbreaks which have alarmed parents, a 10-year-old boy from the Wolsey Junior and Infant school in New Addington, has died. and an eight-year-old girl is now recovering in intensive care. Croydon Health Commis-

sioning Agency yesterday confirmed that a third pupil from the junior school is ill with meningococcal septicaemia, a form of blood poisoning caused by the meningitis bacterium. Two of the pupils are in the

same year. The death rate from meningococcal septicaemia is one in live, compared with 3 death rate of one in ten for meningococcal meningitis.

During 1995 there has been a 50 per cent increase in the number of suspected or confirmed cases of meningococcal disease in the Creydon area, and GPs were warned to be increasingly vigilant for symptoms during the winter months when the disease peaks.

Hewever, Dr John Thomas a consultant in Public Health Medicine at Croydon Health. said that it was "quite unusual" to have three pupils infected at the same school in such a short time span. Tests are under way to see if the cases are linked, and preventive antibiotic treatment has been recommended for all

Public health officials in West Yorkshire have also confirmed meningitis in two pupils at the Emley First School in Huddersfield. One child was admitted to the Huddersfield Royal Infirmary over the weekend, and the other is at the Pinderfields

school remains open but throat swahs will be taken from the 100 pupils and 15 staff today and they will be offered antibiotics. The Huddersfield outbreak follows four cases in the nearbe Dewsbury area, including two girls, aged nine and 10, who

Hospital, in Wakefield, The

were pupils at the Overthorpe Junior and Infant School, More than 450 pupils and staff were last week given preventive antibiotic treatment.

In Leeds, two sassear-old pupils at the Our Lady of Good Scacroff, have been confirmed with meningitis but the school will remain open.

A 21-year-old student at Leeds University died of menineitis last week, believed to be the Ithh death from the disease in the city this year. A 16-year-old boy and a baby are recovering from the illness. Ray Thompson, of the National Meningitis Trust, said yesterday that cases were running at between 17 and 20 per cent up on last year and the number of deaths was

likely to top 2000. At St Mary's Hospital, in London, which runs one of the few meningitis "crash" teams in the UK, a spokesman said cases had increased on last year. Between 1 November and 5 December, the hospital had treated 24 cases compared with nine

## Judges back **Howard over** life sentences

girls, 9 and 10; were from the Overthorpe Junior and Infant

Leeds: 21 year old student at University dies lest week. A 16 year old boy and a baby also III. Also confirmed yesterday that two children aged 6, pupils at the Our Lady of Good Coursel School, Seacroft, Leeds, have meringitis. School remains open.

London: a 16 year old pupil from the Godolphin and Latymer school in Hammersmith is recovering from meningais.

Croydon: Three cases at the Wolsey Infant and Junior School

New Addington. All have meningococcal septicaemia. School

School, Antibiotics given and swabs taken.

closed until next Monday including nursery.

STEPHEN WARD

Secretary, successfully appealed yesterday against one of his

Mr Howard, who is also in

But yesterday in the Court of Appeal, the Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Bingham, together with Lord Justice Neill and Lord Justice. Hirst, set aside Mr Justice Turner's ruling and said that the Home Secretary's decould not be "stigmatised as ir-

their judgment that they were not concerned whether John

called upon to consider the allocation of sentencing powers between the executive and the judiciary. That again is none of "We are concerned, and con-

and we have no views on the

subject. Nor are we in any way

cerned only, to rule upon the lawfulness of the decision."

They also made clear that the case was not a challenge to the Home Secretary personally and. although he is named as the per-son appealing to the court, this was only because he is the secretary of state responsible for

The judge at Pierson's trial, and the then Lord Chief Justice. Lord Lane, recommended that the "tariff" Pierson must serve for retribution and deterrence should be set at 15 years. But Pierson, who maintained his innocence, was told in August had increased his minimur sentence to 20 years.

Mr Howard has been overruled by the courts in fewer than 10 per cent of judicial review challenges since he became Home Secretary in 1993, Baroness Blatch, Minister of State at the Home Office, told the House of Lords yesterday. She said the cost of defending his decisions in court had been "about £2m" in 1994-95.

egal Affairs Correspondent

Michael Howard, the Home many court-room defeats.

open conflict with the judiciary over his plans to remove some of judges' discretion on sentencing, was told last month by Lord Justice Turner in the High Court that he had "failed to measure up to the required standard of fairness" when he increased the minimum life sentence of a murderer from 15

The appeal judges stressed in

Pierson – who was jailed for life in 1985 for the "horrifying and apparently motiveless" murder of his parents - should serve 15 or 20 years and they had no part to play in making that decision. It is none of our business.

## Firms attacked for not tackling stress

according to a survey to be published by the Industrial Society sponsored by Texaco. highlighting the cost to business.

Managers believe stress has become an integral part of most jobs, which is "deeply disturbing", according to Tony Morgan, chief executive of the society. "Firms are doing dangerously little to tackle the

The damaging flu epidemic now afflicting the UK is nothing compared with the cost

Workplace stress is a problem to business of the stress epi-in nine out of ten organisations. demic," he said at an industrial journalism awards ceremony,

> Mr Morgan also said a radi-cal solution, such as appraisal by employees or even customers, was needed to defuse the continuing controversy over

executive pay.

The industrial journalism award winner for national newspapers was Robert Taylor, of the Financial Times. The regional winner was Peter Cunliffe, of

## DAILY POEM

### Reading the Deer

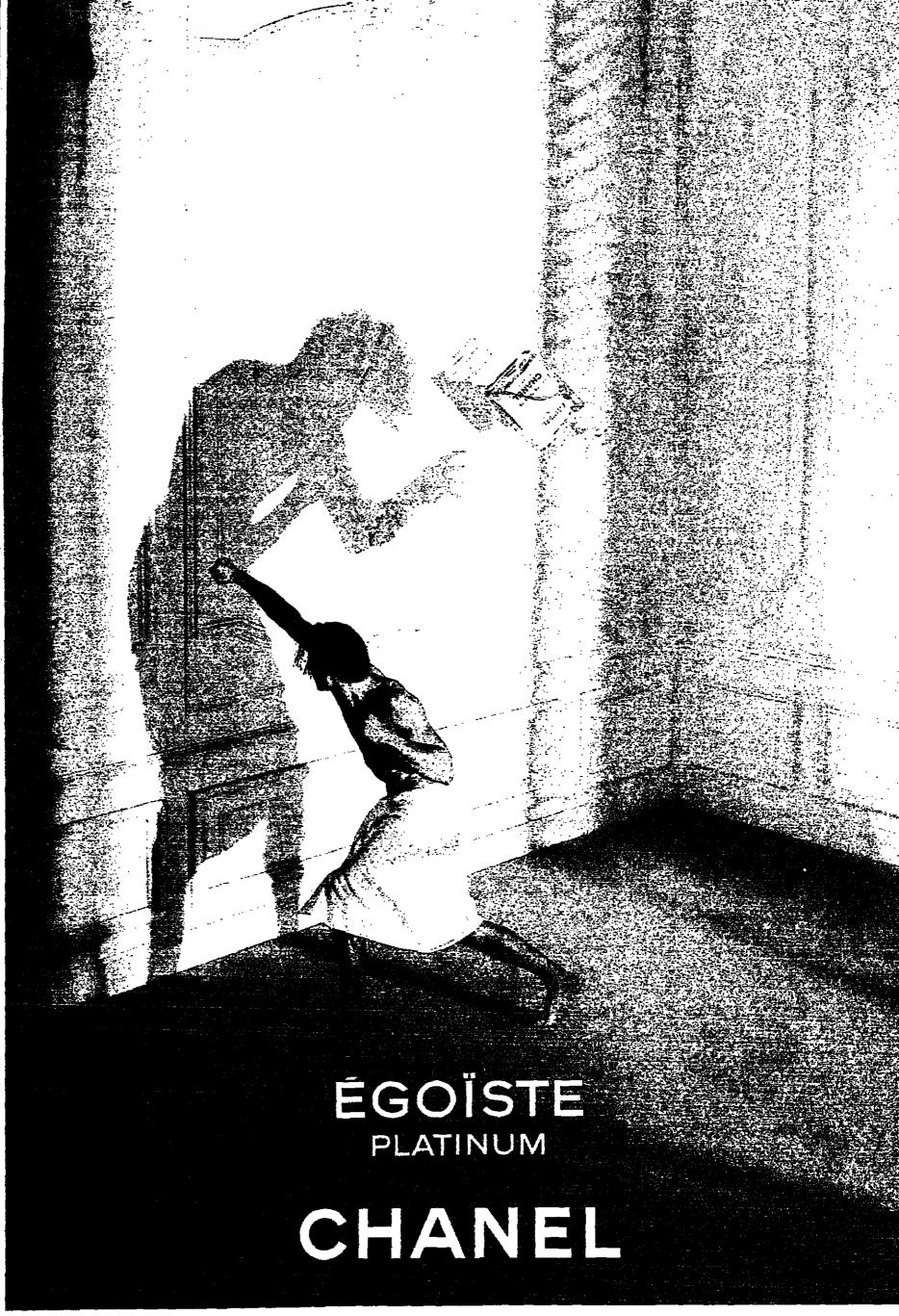
By MR Peacocke

In the new plantation below the house, young snow; and the record of deer.

Each foot drove slantwise to the brown, cleaving over a white quill. Here they plaited a track. Unravelled here — three, four scraped away, pulled up moss, dropped buttercup leaves, bit plantain Black grouse leapt up here, primaries smacking the drift in sharp fans; did the roe startle? Now by the alders; the broken wall: the duch rank with mint. One dawdled, stepping aside: willow twigs nipped off. Lost now under birches and hazels where mow has scarcely ledged, skeining to the beck through wet clay.

A shift in air. Broad flakes begin, filling and blurring patterned tracks of boots that have trampled the path of the deer.

MR Peacocke lives on a hill farm in Cumbria which she works as a smallholding. Her first collection Marginal Land (Peter-loo) was published in 1988 to warm applause, her voice being likened to Larkin in its "plain language, strong rhythms, full rhymes". A second collection Selves appeared this autumn (Peterloo, £5.95). It is a town and country collection with an old-fashioned air and includes a short history of the The Dansant, a tribute to Jean Muir, and a hypnotic Goose Hymn.



## news

Problem housing estates: Charity calls for radical government strategy to tackle downward spiral of poverty and lawlessness

# 'Give power to the people to combat squalor'

**GLENDA COOPER** 

Britain's 2,000 worst housing estates can be saved from a downward spiral of poverty and lawlessness by introducing a radical 20-year strategy handing power back to tenants, an independent charitable foundation said yesterday.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation wants the Government to set up a community resource fund to give local people access to specialist advice, training and running costs after dramatic improvements in estates where nants became involved.

The foundation has funded a £1.5m research programme in over 100 estates over the past two years called Action on Estates. Poverty emerged as the root cause of many problems.

Earlier this year the foundation's report on income and wealth estimated that the gap between rich and poor was at its widest for 50 years. In the counnomically inactive households is now a majority; only 41 per cent of household heads had iobs in 1991 compared with 59 per cent in 1979.

One in four children in secondary schools that serve



GCSEs compared to 1 in 20 nationally, and truanting is four

times higher than average. The problems of poverty are exacerbated by stereotyping. Estates suffer from "postcode"

discrimination: taxi drivers and delivery vans will not go there, employers lose interest once addresses are quoted and it is almost impossible to get loans

munity life and can create the report, Unleashing the Potential. Bringing residents to the breeding grounds for loneliness and despair, racial harasscentre of regeneration, said: "Such extremes of disadvantage ment and crime and social stigma place huge

dents are in charge of day-today running have been transformed. Last year, 10 members of a gang from the Pennywell es-tate in Sunderland were jailed for a total of 57 years after al-

most killing a traffic policeman Recently an initiative called Pride in Pennywell opened with a carnival attracting 5,000 people. The scheme has a newspaper and a radio show on Wear regeneration; Joseph Rowntree Foundation; £10.50 & £1 p&p.

FM to publicise activities; Halton Moor, in Leeds, famous for joyriding, is halfway through renovations of its 1,100 prop-erties, and Meadowell, in North Shields, the scene of riots, has a new youth centre built by a co-operative formed by local

young people. The report concludes that while it is crucial for residents to play a vital role, the Govmment must show the way by introducing a national strategy and starting a rolling programme of targeted investment. Money could be found from existing grants, the National Lottery or local business.

Government departments such as the Benefits Agency and DSS should also co-operate. 'We want an enabling central government that allows resources to be released in the way local agencies feel is most appropriate." Ms Taylor said. The positive message that targeting multiple disad-vantaged neighbourhoods over a period of time and involving local people in the tasks of regeneration can produce significant improvements."

Unleashing the Potential:
Bringing residents to the centre of

GASE STUDY

their houses so they felt they had

some control over their lives and

for the first time could have

pleted half of the 1,100 prop-

erties but are not stopping

there. They have also organised

an outreach worker to try to

help the young unemployed

get jobs and have set up envi-

ronmental groups planting

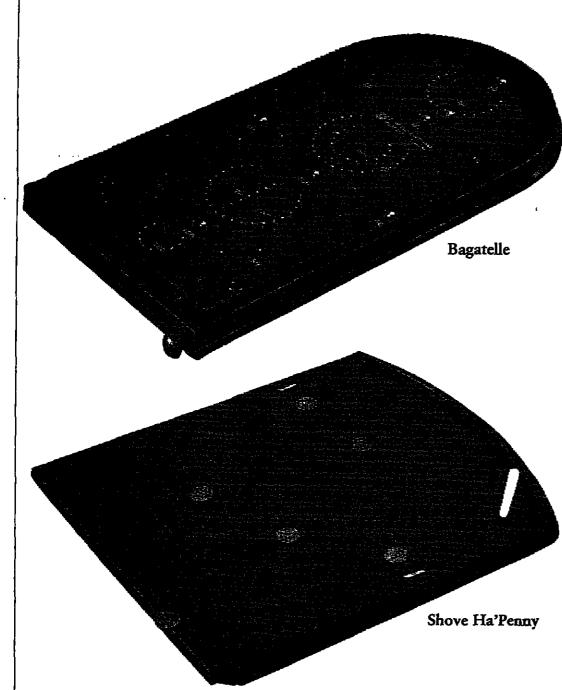
more greenery around the estate. Traffic has been slowed

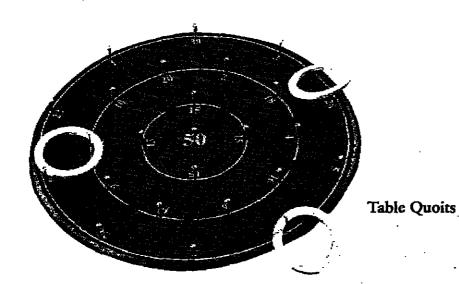
down with anti-speed devices.

"It makes the tenants have

what they really liked." The board has so far com-

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The Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood houses one of the largest toy collections on public view in the world. For information please call 0181-980 2415.

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## Tenants find a fresh pride

Three years ago the Leeds estate Halton Moor attracted national notoriety with its joyriding problem, writes Glen-da Cooper. Police accused young people of trying to kill of-ficers by deliberately ramming stolen vehicles into police cars.

In the 12 months leading up to January 1993, 230 stolen vehicles were set on fire by young people on the estate. There were six specific incidents of joyriders trying to kill or injure police officers during a three-

But those on the estate management board of Halton Moor, which came into operation in 1993, say that the estate no longer lives up to lurid newspaper headlines - if indeed it Margaret Wilson, vice-

chairwoman of the board, said they had applied for £23m in funding from the Government in order to improve the estate and make it somewhere to be proud of. We started off with the out-

sides - the roofs, windows," she said. "And then we gave them parking bays. the insides, with fitted kitchens and bathrooms ... And most

more pride in the area in which they live." Ms Wilson said. "They feel they have an investment now for the future. We have volunteers for our youth

club and our after-school club." Police started work several years ago on a football scheme and have helped on estate improvements such as lockable windows and closed-circuit TV.

And the problems that have haunted Halton, such as the joy riding? "It's very quiet now on Halton Moor," Ms Wilson said 1993 I didn't think was justified. Yes there were incidents but it was very different to the way it was set up in the press. We have importantly we let people a very good relationship with the choose what they wanted inside police and each other now."

\*INDEPENDENT

## **Special** Reports **Diary** 1996

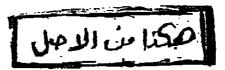
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Sell-off row: Labour claims cash for improvements is being lost

## Railtrack 'starving network of investment'

DONALD MACINTYRE and CHRISTIAN WOLMAR

The Rail Regulator is seeking assurances from Railtrack the Independent's disclosure that the state-owned company has sef aside £1.14bn in advance of privatisation rather than spend it on railway maintenance and improvement.

The move is disclosed in a letter from the regulator. John Swift QC, to Brian Wilson, had protested that Railtrack's annual accounts had disclosed that the money had been set aside to "boost its pre-privati-sation balance sheet" when it could have been spent on the



probe into firm's accounts

nation's "cash-starved railways" Mr Wilson pressed the regulator to ensure that the money paid to Railtrack by rail oper-ators after privatisation in access charges would be used for the purpose for which they had been originally intended -namely investment and maintenance of track and signalling.

Mr Wilson called last night track's privatisation until "all Liberal Democrat MP for questions relating to their ac North Devon, Nick Harvey, questions relating to their ac North Devon, Nick Harvey, counts are resolved. He added: and the Labour MP for York, "It will be a monstrous fraud upon the taxpayer and passengers if they are allowed to carry the proceeds of this billion ment on protecting existing pound underspend into the private sector."

that Railtrack does indeed have plans in place to achieve the increase in expenditure, particularly in 1996-7, needed ... to start addressing the shortfalls in expenditure levels."
The form and content of

Railtrack's statutory accounts are for the directors and the company's auditors to determine, not for the regulator But I will want to ensure that the accounts provide the necessary information to allow me, Railtrack's customers, and Others with a legitimate interest to understand the underlying financial position of the

Mr Swift says that he will especially want to ensure that Railtrack continues to disclose expenditure on asset maintenance and renewal . . . so that any change in levels of expenfiture or adjustments to the provisions made this year is clear to readers of the accounts".

It also emerged yesterday that two out of three Tory MPs accept that rail privatisation is

electorally unpopular.

The survey of 51 Tory MPs for the pressure group Save Our Railways also interviewed 42 Labour and seven other MPs for the pressure group Save Our Tory MPs would welcome a rethink on the issue which was introduced by the Railways Act

While three-quarters of Conservative MPs believe that standards will improve, nearly all the abour members and other MPs hold the opposite view.

Jonathan Bray, said: "The late Tory MP Robert Adley's pre-diction that privatisation would be a 'poll tax on wheels' is now coming true."
Tomorrow the High Court

will hear the judicial review of the franchising process brought High Bailey, will give evidence at the hearing which will focus on whether promises to Parliaservices have been broken.

ivate sector."

In his letter, Mr. Swift says:

conducted by Business and While one year's expenditure Planning Research Internafigures should not be taken in tional on behalf of Connect isolation, I will want to be clear Public Affairs, for the group.

## Huge inquiry to assess safety of Railtrack

The Railways Inspectorate has launched its biggest investigation, involving all its 25 field rail interests" and therefore "the ininspectors, to assess the safety of the new structure of the railway following the creation of Railtrack.

The inspectorate took this unprecedented action after a series of leaked documents this fied in reducing the number of summer relating to the relationship between Railtrack and 13 to 5. According to Railtrack. its contractors raised fears that

and added that the inspectorate had admonished Railtrack for failing to supply all documents relating to these incidents.

If the report even hints that safety concerns have not been properly addressed, the privatisation of Railtrack, scheduled for next spring, could be delayed. One of the leaks quoted a Rail-track safety official, Jack Rose, saying that Railtrack needed "18 months" before its safety sys-tems were ready for privatisation.

Concern about the safety implications of privatisation was also highlighted in the annual report of the Railways Inspectorate for the year up to 1 April 1995, published yesterday, which warned of "uncertainties and risks if [privatisation] is not

from the statistics in the report cides and six children under 16 that the break-up of the railways in April 1994, with British Rail being split into more than 100 units, has led to a reduction in Mr Robertson said that none of safety standards, Stan Robertson, Chief Inspector of the Railways tistically significant fluctuations.

warns that there was "no reason for being complacent". He warned that within the restrucdustry will have to take steps to ensure that the safety management system is complete, cohesive and totally effective."

The inspectorate is also to as-sess whether Railtrack is justithese trains, used to recover desafety was being compromised.

Alan Cooksey, Deputy Chief quired less often as there are Inspector of the Railways, said fewer derailments. However, that the report being prepared the annual report says that "aigmould be published in January miscant" derailments increased and edded that the inspectorate from 87 to 107. quired less often as there are from 87 to 107.

Evidence from the first year of operation after the creation of Railtrack shows that the safety record was about the same as the previous year, the best on record. The number of train accidents fell from 977 in 1993/94 to 907 in 1994/95, with significant accidents - those potentially the most dangerous to passen-

gers - falling by eight to 110.

The total number of people killed on the railways, exclud-ing trespassers and suicides. rose by two to 42 and fatal accidents to passengers increased from 16 to 17. Staff killed on all railways increased from eight to nine, and 13 level-crossing users were killed, one fewer than in the previous year

managed properly".

A total of 254 trespassers
While there is no evidence were killed, including 120 suicompared with corresponding figures the previous year respectively of 262, 141 and eight these changes represented "sta-



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## **Thornton** 'said she would kill husband'

HEATHER MILLS Home Affairs Correspondent

Three days before Sara Thornton fatally stabbed her drunk-en and violent husband, she had told a friend she was going to kill him, the Court of Appeal

heard yesterday. The following day, her step-son had to intervene and force her to drop a kitchen knife she was pointing at her husband – the same knife she later used to kill him. She also gave her husband an overdose of Mogadon tranquilliser tablets, crushed up in some cooked chicken.

Urging the appeal judges to reject Thornton's appeal, the prosecuting counsel Brian Escott Cox QC said there was "an extremely strong case for the prosecution on murder".

Thornton, 38, of Atherstone, Warwickshire, was jailed for life in February 1990 for murdering her husband Malcolm, a former policeman, with a single thrust of the kitchen knife as he lay in a drunken stupor on a sofa. Her original appeal on the grounds that she was "pro-voked" was rejected in 1991.

But her case was referred back to the court after new evidence emerged, indicating she was suffering from "battered woman syndrome" and a personality disorder which together made her vulnerable and liable to suddenly "snap" under the stress of repeated abuse from her alcoholic husband.

But yesterday Mr Escott Cox said the evidence "militates very

strongly against this being a true case of provocation". He between the autumn of 1987,

Mr Escott Cox told the court, Thornton had told a friend

said she was in a difficult mood on the dressing-table mirror: Bastard Thornton, I hate you."
Mr Escott Cox said the stab-

but one "clinical blow". But Michael Mansfield QC. for Thornton, said there was ev idence showing that she had suffered abuse over a period of time which, coming on top of her vulnerable personality, had

and threatened to kill her. Last night, Thornton's hopes of being cleared hung in the bal-ance after the appeal judges, led by Lord Taylor of Gosforth, the Lord Chief Justice, reserved their decision. However they agreed to renew her bail pend-

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claimed Thornton was not a woman with "a long-term history of being a battered wife". The violence and threats to which she had been subjected had, he claimed, been "sporadic" and occurred over a short period when the couple started living together, until Mr Thornton's death in June 1989. Three days before the killing,

and had written in lipstick bing itself did not involve raised

caused her to snap when her busband had called her a whore

ing their judgment, expected before Christmas.

"she was not prepared to give anything up" for her husband and was going to kill him. On the night of the killing, he

voices, or a frenzied attack,

**NICHOLAS SCHOON Environment Correspondent** 

es of the Durham coastline could soon be cleaned up with the help of National Lottery One-hundred million tonnes of colliery waste were tipped over the cliffs on to the beach-

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takes – but a quarter of customers still find errors in their erage. Barclays and NatiWest were bottom of the table.

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The bad news.

es below from the six mines of the East Durham coalfield. Currents spread the material One of Britain's more shamealong the coast, smothering the sand in black deposits several metres deep. The waste exful eyesores - the black beachtended the beaches 100 yards or more out to sea. For nine miles the inshore waters are stained black and the foam in breaking waves is grey. All life on the

programme. The British Bankers Ass

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Until two years ago, a giant conveyor belt at the Easington pit carried waste a short distance from the cliffs while bulldozers soread it over the beach. It resembled an industrial scene from behind the Iron Curtain

before communism's collapse. For decades a succession of ministers, councillors and expert bodies said it was a shame and a disgrace. But nothing was

done to end the tipping because British Coal claimed it could not identify or afford any alternative. The Government declined to fund any solution.

Coal-ravaged coast in line for £13m clean-up

Pollution blackspot: Lottery cash sought to help heal shameful scars of industrial vandalism

Tipping ceased with the demise of the East Durham coal industry, and nature has now begun its own clean-up. Easington was the last of the pits to shut, in 1993, and its infamous conveyor has been demolished. The sea is eroding the thick layer of sticky, clay-like coal waste and working its way back

towards the limestone cliffs. Durham County Council and seven other local and national bodies want to speed up the restoration, bring wildflowers

the vandalised coast a place that hundreds of thousands of people visit every year. The beaches, and the steep-sided little valleys which run down to them, are now used for fly-tipping and dumping stolen cars.

The partners have applied to the Millennium Commission for £5.3m of lottery money. Their proposals, costing a total of £13m, have made it on to the commission's shortlist and a decision is expected later this

The most expensive item is the removal of two waste tips on the beaches, using bulldozers and drag-lines. If they are left there, the returning sea will

ing further damaging pollution. The next largest expense is the building of six new railway stations on the under-used coastal line which connects Tyneside and Teesside. Today there is only one halt and it is difficult to get to much of the coast by car. But people would be able to walk straight down to the beach or

on to the clifftops from the new

stations, or hire bicycles to

ride on the planned network of

cycle paths. Development is to be kept to an absolute minimum. "There will be no bungalows, no funfairs and nothing but the sun, the wind and the unpredictable North Sea," says the botanist David

TUC in pension-rights battle

The TUC is expected to appeal against the rejection yesterday of claims for backdated pension benefits on behalf of 60,000 part-time workers, most of

whom are women. An industrial tribunal in not be possible for them to claim any pension beyond the two-year limit already established. The total backdated

The claims - submitted on behalf of part-timers in the NHS, banking, education, the local authority sector and the power supply industry - are now likely to go before the Employment Appeals Tribunal.

The judgment by the Birm-ingham tribunal also indicated "out of time".

While the tribunal argued that applications should have been submitted within six termined that employers should award could amount to £95m, months of the end of the con- not be let off the hook for past

James Goudie, counsel for the TUC, said the relevant period was the six months after a key European Court judgment in September last year that employers who barred part-time workers from pension schemes could be guilty of indirect sex

John Monks, TUC general secretary, said: "The TUC is de-

according to the TUC. tract of employment in question, discrimination." Simply the best value

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Photograph: Jean-Christophe Kahn/Reuter

# First signs of compromise emerge

**MARY DEJEVSKY** 

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The 12-day-old crisis in France came to a head yesterday with demonstrations across the country, the extension of public sector strikes into the private sector, and the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, refusing to withdraw his welfare reforms.

Amid the general chaos, however, there were small signs that both sides were tentatively looking for an acceptable way out. Mr Juppé mounted a strident defence of his reforms as be spoke in the National Assembly, where he was answering a censure motion tabled by Socialist MPs, but he clarified the distinction between the structural reforms of the welfare system and the special pension. rights of different branches of the public sector. These, he said,

made the same point at a preparatory meeting with MPs from the Gaullist-led coalition.

These "special regimes", which include early retirement deals for train drivers and miners, sparked the original protests. Public-sector workers feared their rights would be abolished by a government how public and private sector pension arrangements could be made fairer.

The government also ap-peared to offer another olive branch, by saying that it would postpone a major element of a tax reform planned for 1996.

It was unclear, however, how successful in defusing the protests. And, for the French public, they were largely ob-scared by Mr Juppe's fierce Thatcherite terms of there day in some of the biggest being "no alternative" to the reforms, He said: "Yes, France can and must embark boldly on the road to reforms which have been delayed too long."

But earlier, speaking to gov-ernment deputies in a private meeting, he was reported to have said that the "door was open" to negotiations.

"I do not have the intention to commit suicide. I am courageous, but not reckless," Mr Juppé said. Union leaders also said they were prepared to

Government concessions may be too late to defuse what have become highly personalised protests whose chief target is not just the "Juppé plan", but Mr Juppé himself. This was the main chapt of several hundred thousand demonstrations seen in France since the student revolt of 1968. More than 50,000 turned out in Paris despite perishing temperatures and the first snowfall

One source of consolation for the government - and the first

might yet have a chance of victory - was the sharp diminution by two-thirds of the traffic jams into Paris in the morning rushhour. Monday had seen a record total of 600km at a standstill.

The drop probably reflected. in part, people's decision to stay sign in the past week that they at home to avoid demonstra-

tions and weather, as the trans port strike continued to grip the country, with no trains running and no public transport in the capital and several other cities. Lorry drivers, power workers and teachers joined the strikes in increasing numbers. and most state schools were

## **Britain faces** new power row with EU

sarah helm

Britain faced new demands yesterday to hand over more powers to Brussels during the forthcoming Maastricht review negotiations, or stand accused of stunting the next phase of European evolution.

The calls followed the publication of an inquiry report by the 15 member states on how the European Union should reshape its policies and insultutions in the inter-governmental conference next year. The report, by the "Reflection Group", revealed the true extent of Britain's isolation, and will set new battle lines for the summit of heads of government in Madrid in two weeks.

Playing down the prospect of new confrontation. David Davis, the Foreign Office minister on the Reflection Group. said it was now "probable" that the so-called Maastricht II conference would conclude after the next election in Britain. likely to be early in 1997. He declined to comment on hones expressed by Britain's European partners that a more pro-Euopean Labour government

night be in power by then. The Reflection Group report confirms that during its six months of talks, all but Britain wanted to weaken the power of individual states by increasing the use of qualified majority voting in the EU Council of Minsters. All states but Britain also wanted to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of EU institutions by giving new pow-ers to the European Parliament. The integrationists believe

tively after enlargement to the east. Britain believes there is no need for more integration, insists on maintaining its right to opt out of new EU social policies and resists any new Brussels powers over foreign policy

or asylum and immigration. Expressing frustration at the British position vesterday, Carlos Westendorp, the Spanish chairman of the Reflection Group, said Britain would not he able to remain on the outside: in the end "pragmatism" would prevail. Mr Westendorp said the Maastricht II negotiations would provide a "major historical opportunity" for Europe to prepare for the next milnium, strongly signalling that Britain would not be allowed to

stand in the way. Whichever party is in power in Britain when the Maastricht II negotiations are concluded should be prepared to show "realism", Mr Westendorp said.

Just three months ago John Major expressed the view that Europe's plans for integration were slowing down and the European Union was now dancing to Britain's sluggish tune. At the time, there were signs of growing disarray within the union, with France and German in particular appearing unde-cided about federalist plans. However, Britain's clear refusal to compromise on even the more limited power-sharing proposals laid before the Reflection Group has spread new frustration among other European leaders, who now find themselves within months of the launch of Maastricht II talks with almost no common ground

## would not be touched. He had sembly, in which he spoke in streets of French cities yester-How a smug political élite got it all wrong

MARY DEJEVSKY

When Alain Juppé stood up in the National Assembly yesterday to defend his government against a vote of censure from the Socialists, he and his fellow Gaulhets might well have asked themselves how they had got into this mess. Only six months before, all the cards had seemed stacked in their favour, giving them more room for manoeuvie than any government in

France for more than a decade. Jacques Chirac had won a convincing majority in the presidential election in May and had a seven-year term before him. The Gaullist-led coalition held three quarters of seats in the fortable majority in the Senate. The next parliamentary elections are not due until 1998.

Mr Juppé was not only seen as one of the best brains of his generation, but appeared so politically and temperamentaly close to Mr Chirac that disagreement looked unlikely. For the first time for many years, it. seemed, the French constitutional axiom "The President" presides and the government governs" had a chance of work-

ing. How did it go so wrong? First, contradictory election promises from Mr Chirac that allowed different sections of the voting public - taxpayers, the unemployed, students, big business - all to believe they would benefit at the same time.

Juppe's, deriving from his first government, appointed immediately after Mr Chirac's election. Marked by departmental squabbles, it was dissolved after five months, having squandered a honeymoon period when voters would have expected, if not fully supported, change. The country's financial position looked stronger and the jobs situation better than today, allowing a little more room for manoeuvre. By the time Mr Juppé was reappointed Prime Minister and had named a leaner, shimmer, more like-minded team, public disappointment

had already set in. ities of France may also have presidential and parliamentary France is on the streets.

played a part. The huge majority for the Gaultist-led coalition in parlisment reflected the voters' mood in 1993, exasperated with 12 years of François Mitterrand. This year's presidential election showed a 53-47 right-left split. The mayoral elections held a month later showed a still more even division, with a considerable bias against established power. The President can call new parliamentary elections, but Mr Chirac had no incentive to do so, because of his party's huge majority. So President, parliament and public are out



MPs was not enough

Constitutional relations between the Prime Minister, the government and parliament also limit the degree to which parliament, in particular, can The second failure was Mr function as the "voice of the people" in response to the pub-ic mood. The Prune Minister is appointed by the President and is, in theory, accountable both to him and to parliament. In practice, however, parliament has hardly any real "checking"

role at all. The fact that ministers may not also be MPs means that the common interest which binds together the governing party in Britain hardly exists. Similarly, voters have no confidence that if they lobby their MPs their days before, understood that views will be passed on to ministers.

The separation of executive and the legislature is hardly The constitutional peculiar unique to France. But with

elections not coinciding it means ministers and MPs can both be detached from the national mood in a way that would be difficult in Britain.

A third crucial factor is the separate world inhabited by the French élite, which includes ministers and MPs of most parbeen educated (at the highly selective grandes écoles), worked (in well-paid safe jobs in the civil service or state industry) and lived (in prestigious and subsidised accommodation) in conditions different from those of the rest of the population.

The reception for Mr Juppe's social security reforms illustrates the gap between the élite and the rest. When he presented his proposals to the National Assembly three weeks ago, he had prepared the ground im-peccably. Potential dissidents on the right were heard and given small concessions, so were difficult lobby groups, and Socialist leaders, including the leader of the biggest, Socialist-domi-nated trade union, the CFDT

Within this small group, the proposals were, if not welcomed, accepted as inevitable. So was Mr Juppe's decision to rush the main proposals through parliament by "edict", rather than after a series of par-Framentary debates. Mr Juppé sat back, watched the franc rise and believed his troubles

. But as news of the reforms filtered through to the rest of the population (Mr Juppé's speech in parliament was not televised), the mood turned hostile and stubborn. No one - not the President, not Mr Juppé, not even the social affairs minister - went on television to tell people what the measures en-

tailed; rumours multiplied. The

decision to pass the measures

by edict looked like additional definice of the French public. Finally, last weekend the Socialists in parliament, like the inajor trade union leaders a few public anger was forcing their hand. They tabled a censure motion. It was a late and hopeless gesture, which served to illustrate why real opposition in

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Bosnia settlement: In snub to Americans, French announce Balkan agreement brokered in Ohio will be called Elysée Treaty

# Paris tries to steal US peace laurels

SARAH HELM

Stepping up its drive to snatch the role of chief peace-maker in Bosnia. France yesterday announced that the Dayton accords would be transformed into the Elysée Peace Treaty when the agreement is formally signed in Paris next week.

At a meeting of Nato's for-eign and defence ministers in Brussels, France also signalled that it intends to claim a new role in the "renewal" of Nato. Hervé de Charette, the French Foreign Minister, confirmed France is to rejoin Nato's military and defence planning bodies, which it left in 1966, putting Paris back at the heart of the alliance's decision-making.

The French diplomatic drive

and the second of the second o

ing yesterday the purpose of which was to finalise plans for the deployment of the 60,000The French diplomatic ofstrong Implementation Force in Bosnia. France's partners welcomed Paris's decision to resume its military connections with Nato, although scepticism was voiced about the claims that France could suddenly breathe

life into the alliance. US officials were also muted in their response to the France's unilateral announcement that the Dayton accords are to be transformed into the Elysée Treaty. British officials said there had been no consultation on the decision

Britain will also try to share some of the Dayton limelight when it holds the London implementation conference this weekend, where plans for the re-building of the countries of the

fensive brings to the surface the under-current of transatiantic rivalry over who can lay claim to the success of the Bosnian Paris and London were irri-

tated at the way the US sidelined the Europeans during the negotiations and laid down the law over the Nato peace implementation operation. The Americans have privately dismissed European concerns, arguing that their failed efforts to broker a peace have been characterised by confusion.

Expanding on what he claimed was France's central Charles Millon, the French Defence Minister, vesterday made

had moved "from Paris to Paris", referring, apparently to an earlier inconclusive Paris peace conference, which Mr Millon suggested had led to the deal which is to be signed next week. Neither Mr de Charette or Mr Millon made any reference to the US role, referring

The rationale behind France's rapprochement with Nato appears to be an acknowledgement that full co-ordination of the Bosnia operation cannot come about if French generals are left out of the key planning bodies. "France is ready to work to the renewal of Nato," Mr Millon said.

only to the success of the

"international community".

"France will assure the evolution of Nato so it can adapt



Guarded welcome: A US officer arriving in Tuzia in a UN armoured vehicle

## Media barrage greets first GIs to reach Tuzla

**EMMA DALY** Tuzia

The first US troops dispatched to implement the Dayton peace plan arrived yesterday in Tuzla, a dreary industrial town in northern Bosnia, led by Brigadier-General Stan Cherrie, deputy commander of the 1st Armoured Division. A phalanx of television cameras staked out the main gate of Tuzla's vast military air base to catch the moment of arrival.

The 10 officers in the divisional reconnaissance team arrived in UN armoured troop carriers, but the tell-tale camouflaged helmets among the peace-keepers' blue ones alerted the waiting pack.

"First impressions?" one re-porter asked. "It's cold," replied the American. "Not miserable, just cold." He will change his mind soon enough, and anyway, yesterday was warm by Tuzla's

The city, a former industrial power-house whose welcome sign stands before the back-drop of an enormous power station belching smoke from every orifice, has few material benefits. The city is sinking, victim of the salt mining it is named for - "tuz" is Turkish for "salt". Many old buildings have collapsed. site. The effect is like that of an earthquake, according to the city council's brochure.
"Tuzia – where reason pre-

ty is in control, not the Muslim combat troops will arrive.

SDA that runs the rest of government-held Bosnia, in spite of the city's Muslim majority. There is, therefore, political

rivalry between Tuzla and Sarajevo. The city wants to extend and is seeking funds to convert the air base, one of the larges military fields in former Yugoslavia, into a commercial airport. For the moment, the base is under UN control, but it will be taken over by Nato next ek; in the summer it housed brenica, camped on the runway.

The alliance wants it to operate as an air base, so the first headache for US planners has been to find suitable homes for the 4,000 to 5,000 troops attached to the Tuzia headquarters. The bulk of the force will be based in smaller groups closer to the confrontation line, which will require an enormous engineering effort, building roads, bridges, bases and

Yesterday the American officers, hotly pursued by photographers, were busy with tape measures, checking the dimensions of a bridge on the road and examining a field that might serve as a helicopter landing

experts, plus staff officers, are also working to set up bases in Sarajevo, which will be the site vails" does, however, rejoice in of the overall Nato headquarits multi-ethnic and tolerant ters. The UN is expected to history. It was the only Bosnian transfer its authority to Nato, city not to vote on ethnic lines, led by a British commander, in so the Social Democratic Par- mid-December, after which the

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## RAF mission gives boost to charities

JOHN McKIE

The Independent's Children of War Appeal had a boost yes-terday with the news that the RAF will fly crucial medical equipment to seriously ill children in Bosma.

The equipment - an infant and child's ventilator, two special infusion pumps and a monitoring VDU system - was donated respectively by North-wick Park Hospital, the IVAC medical firm, and the computer company Hewlett Packard. The project, which was organ-ised by the Child Advocacy In-ternational charity, will bring equipment basic to every British intensive-care unit to the war-

torn country.

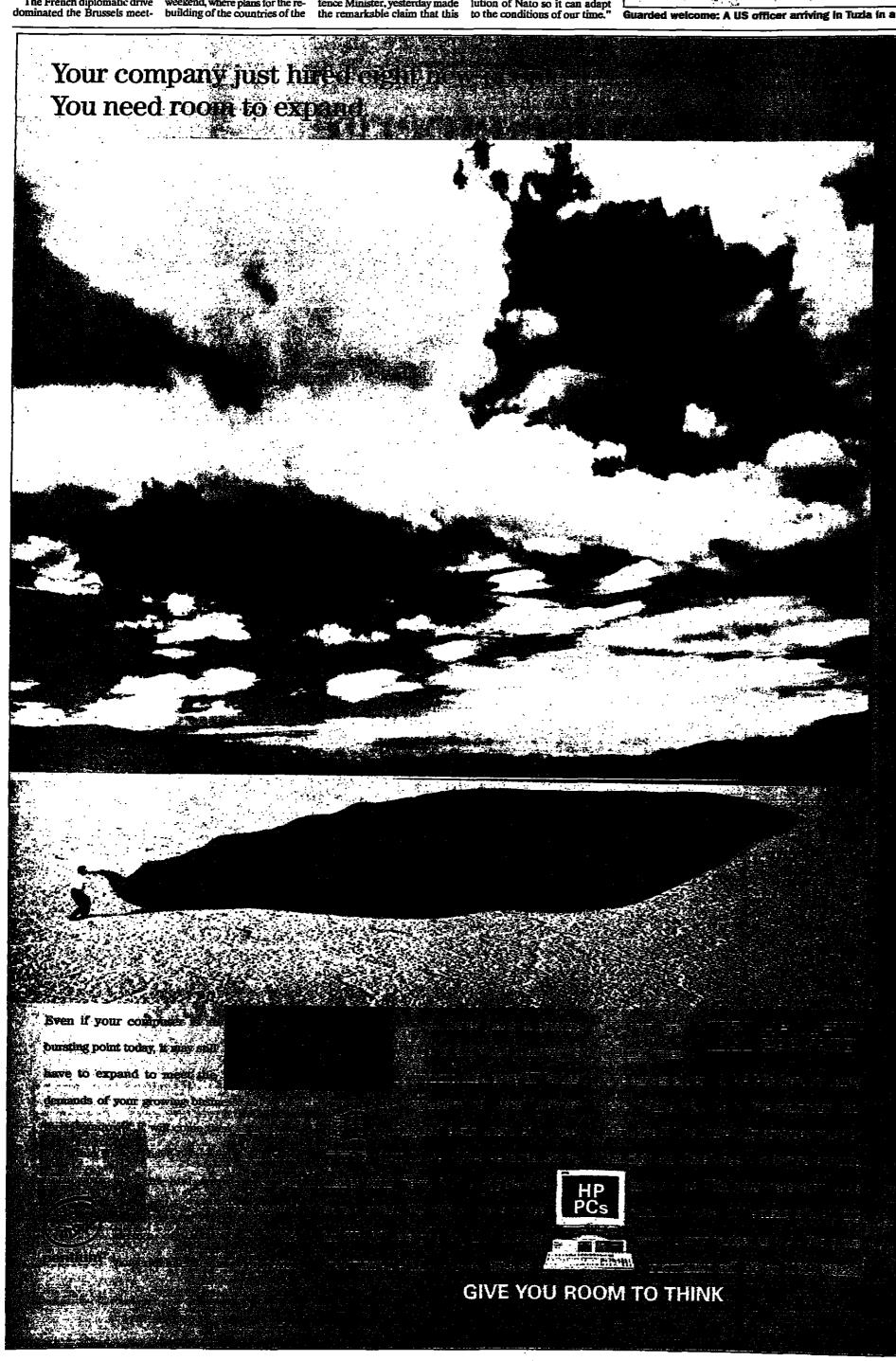
The head of the charity, Professor David Southall, who runs an intensive-care unit for children at North Staffordshire Hospital, Stoke, said: "There's



every intensive-care unit in the UK. In Bosnia, there's no real intensive-care unit for children. If anything starts to go wrong, children don't survive

Professor Southall added that every week in Bosnia a baby is born with complicated heart disease, and the new equipment would enable their heartbeats to be monitored. According to the charity's figures, one is a thousand children in Bosnia has a serious illness which cannot be treated without this level of care. Equipment such as the VDU system - which monno doubt children's lives will be saved by this. This equipment would be found by each bed in

## \*INDEPENDENT CHILDREN OF WAR APPEAL payable to one of the following charities British Red Gross Former Yugoslavia Appeal Save the Children (olease tick as appropriate) se post your donation(s) to: The Independent Children of War Appeal, fire Independent, PO Box 4011, London E14 5BB. THANK YOU



# Cairo's dirty war spills across Europe

ROBERT FISK Cairo

Alaa al-Din Nazmi drove into the underground car-park of his luxury Geneva apartment at about 9pm on 13 November. Married with a four-monthold daughter, the commercial counsellor to the Egyptian em-bassy should have had no reason to fear assassination. Officials from the UN's European headquarters also lived in the apartment block and - officially, at least - Nazmi spent much of his time negotiating the future of Egypt's basket-case economy with members of the

World Trade Organisation.
But no sooner had he parked his car and begun walking across the garage to take the lift to his seventh-floor flat than a gunman – or gunmen – opened fire. Nazmi was hit by six bullets and died instantly, although his body was not discovered for another two hours.

In Cairo, however, political sources suggested that Nazmi was working under diplomatic cover, and that his real job was to track down members of Egyptian Islamist armed groups in Europe who have sworn to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak's regime. Nazmi's murderers said as much two days later. Describing themselves as the Gemaa al Adela al Alamiya - the "International Justice Group" - they claimed that his real job was to hunt Muslim "activists" on behalf of the Egyptian government.

The Egyptian authorities insist Nazmi was no more than a diplomat. But his murder came less than two months after Talaat Qassem, the co-founder of Egypt's Gemaa Islamiya - the "Islamic Group" largely re-sponsible for the anti-Mubarak surrection that has cost almost 900 lives in Egypt over the past three years - disappeared on a visit to the Croatian capital of Zagreb. Mr Qassem held refugee status in Denmark and his family said that he was visiting former Yugoslavia to research a book. But other sources claimed he was on the way to visit Islamist fighters in

Whatever the purpose of his trip, the Croatian authorities said they arrested the 38-year old Egyptian on 12 September. fined him for violating resi-dence laws and expelled him

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Bomb aftermath: A crater outside the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad. Some of the 18 dead may have been secret agents

areas bordering Afghanistan.

brother of Lieutenant Khaled

who murdered President Anwar

the Egyptian government's first

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from the country six days later. Muslim activists sympathetic to the Gemaa, however, told a different story. They said Mr Qassem was seized by a group of American intelligence offi-cers, interrogated and later sent to Egypt via the Croatian port of Rijeka, and is now being held in the Al-Mansoura Egyptian intelligence headquarters. Both the United States and the Croatians flatly denied the story. But two weeks later, a massive car bomb blew up in Rijeka, killing a Croatian policeman. It followed a threat from an organisation calling itself "Vanguards of Conquest" which had warned the Croats not send Mr Qassem

back to Egypt.

By mid-November, therefore, the Egyptian regime was at war with its enemies overseas. President Muharak, outraged at the continuation of the armed

Egypt, decided to send large numbers of his own intelligence officers abroad to hunt down what he called the "Arab Afghans", the Arab volunteers who had fought against the So-viet Union with CIA backing in Afghanistan but once the war was over had turned against the regimes of Egypt and Algeria in the hope of creating Islamic re-Up to 100 Egyptian state se-

curity police were dispatched to London to set up a base for "anti-terrorist" operations in Europe. Around 40 of the men were stated by a reliable military source in Cairo to be armed; all of them were said to be tasked to climinate the "terrorists" who had declared war on Egypt. Mr Mubarak also sanctioned the dispatch of another 100 men to Pakistan to pursue Egyptian militants

mid-November. Then, on 19 One Cairo source says that November, a suicide bomber at-Hassan al-Alfi, the Egyptian Intacked the Egyptian embassy in terior Minister, was behind the the Pakistani capital of Islamentire project, having told the abad, killing 18 men, including President during the summer five diplomats. Once again. that if three named "Arab sources in Cairo said that sev-Afghans" were liquidated, the eral of the dead embassy offi-"terrorist war" against Egypt cials were working under cover would be over. The three men as diplomats to help the Pakwere named as Mr Qassem, an istani authorities track down activist called Iman al-Zawahri, members of the Genua and othwhom the Egyptians believed to er anti-government groups, esbe living in Switzerland, and pecially Mohamed el-Islam-Mohamed el-Islambouly, rebouly; indeed, the same sources ported to be in Pakistan, the claimed that these same men had already secured the extrael-Islambouly, the army officer dition of nine wanted Egyptian militants to Cairo, Mr Muharak was on the point of sending the By late September, Mr next batch of 100 intelligence of-Qassem had disappeared in Croatia. The Swiss denied all ficers to Islamabad on a parallel operation to the one he had knowledge of Mr Zawahri but sanctioned for London when the Islamabad bomb went off. diplomat casualty had been The operation was cancelled at

Two days after the bombing. however, the Adela al Alamina group - which had admitted the murder of Alaa al-Din Nazmi in Geneva - claimed responsibility for the Islamabad slaughter, and added a ferocious new warning. "There are other death sentences that have been issued against other [diplomats] and these sentences will be implemented even if they hang from the curtains of the Kabaa (the holy black stone shrine in Mecca), the group said in a faxed acknowledgement of responsibility, "There is no punishment for you other than cutting your bodies into shreds. You are more criminal than the

The claim also demanded the freeing of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, one of Mr Mubarak's fiercest enemies among Islamic prelates, currently jailed in the ted States, and the release

of Talaat Qassem from his supposed prison in Egypt.

Egypt's tit-for-tal war with its enemies abroad now seems set to produce further bloodshed. And just as Egypt's ruthless intelligence services are hunting for the regime's enemies abroad, President Mubarak has instituted an ever more draconian repression at home. Quite apart from the sentencing of 54 non-violent members of the Muslim Brotherhood before last week's parliamentary elections - in which several of the convicted men were candidates - and the death of 26 Islamists in Egyptian prisons since January, it has now emerged that his intelligence services took action against Cairo University students who protested at his decision to atend the Jerusalem funeral of Titzhak Rabin on 5 November.

Sources close to the Egyptian security forces say that at least 50 students, most of whom were demonstrating against the regime rather than the Jerusalem visit, were arrested by plainclothes policemen posing as university officials. After they had been forced to give their addresses, police raided their homes and took their entire families, including women with babies, to the Central Security Camp on the Cairo-Alexandria road, where many were kept without food and water for two days. Some policemen brought bread and water to the elderly - but only for pay.

Even less publicised were the bloody raids by security force personnel on two villages. Maghaga in Minya province and another hamlet near the Fayoum oasis, just a

month ago. About 1.500 police were reported to have stormed Maghaga, apparently looking for Islamic "terrorists". They killed 13 men, including, they said, a local Muslim militant leader. In Fayoum, seven people were killed, including the local head of the Gemaa Islamiya. This was not just a military operation," a source familiar with the raids said in Cairo this week. "The security forces were asked to be policemen, judges and ex-

ecutioners." Is that, European governments may now ask, what the Egyptian government has ordered its intelligence men

### IN BRIEF

### Rabin murder charges filed

tors filed a charge of premeditated murder against Yigal Amir, the confessed assassin of the prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. Two alleged accomplices his brother Hugai and a friend. Dror Adam - were charged with conspiracy and illegal weapons possession.

### Kindergarten deaths

Vladikavkaz - A man demanding a ransom scized a kindergarten in southern Russia, but detonated two grenades before his deadline expired, killing three children and wounding several other people, including himself. AP

### Swede pulls out

Stockholm — After 24 hours of speculation, the Swedish Finance Minister, Goran Persson. who had been tipped to succeed the Prime Minister, Ingvar Carlsson, next March, said he would not run for the post under any circumstances. Reuter

### Bomb arrests

Paris - French police staged dawn raids in Peris, Lyons. Toulouse and Tours, detaining 19 people they suspect of having links to Muslim extremist networks accused of a wave of bombings since July. Reuter

### PM slightly better

Athens - The ailing Greek Prime Minister, Andreas Papandreou, showed a slight improvement yesterday, according to his doctors, although he remains on life-support systems for his lungs and kidneys Reuter

### Dam kills three

Grenoble - A routine release of water from a hydro-electric dam swept away six young children and their teacher on a nature outing. The teacher and two of the children were drowned.

### Journalist shot

Paris — Khadidja Dahmani, 28. of the Arab-language mass circulation weekly Echourouk, was shot dead at her home near Algiers. She was the second journalist killed in the Algerian

### Dead drunk

Moscow -- More than 160 pecple have frozen to death in Moscow in the past month, in temperatures as low as -19C. The city's health department said all were drunk.

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## South Korea slush-fund scandal hits president

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

The political uproar in South Korea opened a rift in the ruling party yesterday after the former president, Roh Tae Woo, was formally indicted for corruption, along with leaders of the country's biggest companies.

Twenty days after his arrest, prosecutors charged Mr Roh with accepting bribes worth \$355m (£232m) during his five-year term, which ended in 1993. The scale of the alleged corruption is staggering. Thirty-five businessmen are said by the prosecutors to have paid the former president individual sums of up to \$32m for government contracts. These he held in a secret slush fund, scattered through bank accounts held in false names, which he allegedly used to give

Mr Roh has admitted to concealing \$650m, which he claims was amassed through legitimate political donations, Investigators say he has refused to answer many of their questions and may

Several Roh aides were also charged, along with seven businessmen accused of giving the bribes, including the chairmen of the Samsung, Daewoo and Dong Ah conglomerates. Only Mr Roh was held in custody, however, the markets took this as a sign that the businessmen would be treated leniently, and stock prices rose slightly.

But the arrests provoked stirrings of discontent with the current President, Kim Young Sam, as the chairman of his ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) tendered his resignation the first clear sign of Mr Kim's political security being endangered by the investigations.

The DLP chairman, Kim Yoon Hwan, was a close aide of both Mr Roh and his predewas arrested on Sunday on separate charges. The party chairman withdrew his resignation after a meeting with the President, but the rumour in Seoul was that several members of his faction would soon resign. That would leave President Kim in a precarious position in the runup to parliamentary elections next spring. The likeliest outalignment of Korean politics, with the opposition filling the

gulf left by the defectors. But it is a risky strategy for the President, who is thought by many to have let events run out of control, goaded by allegations that he too benefited from Mr Roh's slush fund. What began a month ago as a corruption scandal has become an attack on an entire generation of

With the filing of yesterday's charges, attention will now focus on the much more serious treason case facing Chun Doo Hwan. Three days ago he was arrested for questioning about his leadership of a military coup in 1979. As generals, Mr Chun and Mr Roh are widely believed to have ordered the massacre of more than 200 pro-democracy demonstrators in the city of Kwangju in 1980, still a profound wound in the divided country.

Mr Roh is also being questioned about the massacre, and yesterday five other retired nerals, lesser participants in the coup, were banned from travelling overseas. In a country which achieved democracy only two years ago, after 32 years of military rule, these are bold and disquieting moves. teenagers. For many Tamil militants, the loss of Jaffna town was a devastating blow to their



Tigers take to the jungle as Jaffna falls

It took the Sri Lankan army 50 days to slog nine miles through swamps and rice paddies, dodging snipers and mines. The gov-ernment lost over 450 soldiers, and a third of its air force was destroyed. But in the end, the Sri Lankan forces conquered the rebel citadel of Jaffna. For the first time in five

years, the flag of Sri Lanka, a snarling golden lion, was hoisted over a 400-year old Dutch fort. Until yesterday, Jaffna had been the centre of a ministate set up in northern Sri Lanka by the Tamil Tiger rebels. The autocratic rebels ran their own schools, judged "traitors" in their courts, raised war taxes and drummed up an army of

in Jaffna, people elsewhere in Sri Lanka celebrated this turning point in the 12-year ethnic war between the Sinhalese and the Tamil minority by shooting off fireworks in the streets. The government feared that Sinhalese mobs, drunk on cheap arrak and the triumph over the Tigers, might attack Tamil communities in the capital, Colombo, and elsewhere on the island. But this did not happen. Mar-tial music played on Sri Lankan

"This is not the end of the war. Very soon, we will totally defeat and annihilate the sep-aratist terrorists," said the deputy defence minister, Anuruddha Ratwatte.

radio for most of the day.

flown to the Jaffna ceremony at considerable risk; Tigers have ial jungle with no electricity and camps, and the Tigers refuse to he will not neg considerable risk; Tigers have ial jungle with no electricity and let them return to Jaffna, as if rel of a gun".

ant homeland. planes with missiles and anti-air-While the flag was unfurled craft guns, in jungle areas and over water which had supposedly been cleared by the army.

The minister was only partly right. Victory in Jaffna, indeed, does not signal the end to this war which has cost over 38,000 lives: vanquishing the Tigers may prove impossible militarily. Éven as Sri Lankans rejoiced over the capture of Jaffna yesterday, a Tiger suicide killer drove a lorry piled with explosives into a police camp at Am-parai, hundreds of miles away from the Jaffna battle zone. The police got off lightly, only one man being injured.

Without Jaffna, the Tigers are crippled. Thousands of fighters were wounded in the defence of the town and they have had to He and his generals had be carted to underground hos-

still control large swaths of the may have won the city, but Jaffna peninsula and operate you've lost the Tamil people. freely in the jungles of north and east Sri Lanka. Knowing that the military massed over 25,000 troops for the assault on Jaffna. the Tigers recently switched their attacks to more exposed Sri Lanka's President, Chantargets in the east. Carpeted in

provinces are ideal for guerril-The Tigers have another weapon; the Tamil civilians they herded out of Jaffna. Film clips released by the military on the conquest of Jaffna yesterday showed empty, blasted buildings

with only a few hundred Tamik old and sick, huddled in a school. The rest of the city had been forced by the Tigers to clear out. Over 400,000 Tamils are now in jungle refugee

dense jungle, the eastern

Much as the Tamils would like to go back to their homes. farms and schools, now under the government control, few will dare to risk being branded by the Tigers as traitors.

drika Kumaratunga, is trying to coax the Tigers back into peace negotiations. Generous in victory, she has repeated her offer to give the Tamils greater autonomy in the north and east, with the right to administer their own schools, land and police force.

Her next task is to have this package approved by parliament, which may be tricky, with Sinhalese nationalists opposed to it. And the Tigers' chief. Velupillai Prabakharan, says he will not negotiate "at the bar-

## Rapper witness changes his tune

Los Angeles (AP) — A prosecution witness in the murder trial of the rapper Snoop Doggy Dogg changed his story and said he could not have seen the crime clearly because he was high on marijuana and was not wearing his glasses.

The rapper (real name Calvin Broadus) and his bodyguard, McKinley Lee, are charged with the murder of Philip Woldemariam in 1993. Police sources claim Woldemariam, 20, and Mr Broadus, 24, had connections with dif-ferent street gangs. The victim, a member of the By Yerself Hustlers, apparently resented Mr Broadus, listed as a member of the Long Beach Insane Crips, for moving into his neigh-bourhood during the recording of his hit record, Doggystyle. The defence says the shooting was done in self-defence.

Jose Luis Murillo told the court on Monday that he had been standing with his cousin, Cesar Serrano, who gave evidence last week, when Mr Broadus and Mr Lee drove by several times and then stopped at a park. Prosecutors said that supported their claim that the

pair were looking for a fight. Bobby Grace, for the prosecution, reminded Mr Murillo he had told police he saw a flash of light coming from the Jeep driven by the rapper as the gun went off.

"Did you actually see a flash?" Mr Grace asked Mr Murillo.

"No," Mr Murillo responded. When asked why he gave contradictory information to police, Mr Murillo said: "It was all the excitement," a dding had merely repeated to police what Mr Serrano had

told him he had seen. Deputy District Attorney Ed Nison said he believes the witness may have changed his story because he feared reprisals from the rapper. "Every gang case I have put on, someone wil get up and say, 'I lied to the po-lice'," Mr Nison said. "It's very typical of the situation."

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tube - from pharmacies everywhere. To find out more or to receive a free leaflet about cold sores and their prevention, call this cold sore information line: (Average cost of a call will be 6.3p per minute) 9999666



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## international

# Getting out of my skull in the den of the ju-ju man



The other day I drank firewater from a human skull and made a wish. After an hour with the witchdoctor it seemed like a reasonable thing to do.

Before drinking, I repeated an incantation intoned by my host: "I swear I have drunk with Death. My death will not come from the hand of a human being. My death will come from the good God who put me on to this earth".

I drained the schnapps (£2.50) a bottle from the witchdoctor's wife) as he waived his ju-ju stick above my head. The drink produced a curious tingling sensation in my lips but no ill-effects. I was assured it would protect

Alphonse, the fetishist to whose suburban Lagos home I'd been invited, had knocked back a skull-full a little carlier. I sat with my friend. Rasaki, in the gloom of a low-ceilinged shack, listening to the witchdoctor explaining his art. Inside his den. the hot afternoon air was heavy with the smell of incense.

People come to me for all sorts of reasons", he explained as he crouched on the floor, half a dozen necklaces and charms dangling against his bare chest: "Sometimes they're looking for jobs, other times they're sick or having nightmares.

people dream of cats, said Alphonse, pointing to a

white cat on the bench beside me, "that is a very bad sign. If the cats attack you in your dream then you are seriously sick and need treatment.

Sometimes men bring their wives if they can't become prognant", he continued. "It could be that evil people are stopping her from conceiving. I can lift the curse

At this point Alphonse went into a long rigmarole about the spirits of the sea. I presumed he was talking metaphorically, but in fact he takes the husband and harren wife to the beach, where an offering of fruit or meat is made to the spirit of the sea.

"If someone is about to die", he says, pointing at a disgusting bowl of gunk on an altar. "I ancint him with this potion. It's a secret medicine made with the beads of a vulture, a stork and a crew. It also contains sand and different kinds of herbs".

Alphonse Hounkpe comes from a long line of fetishists in neighbouring Benin. Once known as the Slave Coast and more recently as Dahomey, it is the birthplace of voodoo. He moved to Lagos 16 years ago with his wife and children. His younger son. Valentin, sits on the bench beside me. At one point he does a little sprinkling routine with firewater, though he's not old enough to imbibe. "If someone has been

robbed", explains Alphonse. brandishing a crocodile head with a large bone in its teeth. "this will catch the culprit".

The bone, it transpires, is a human femur. I don't ask where Alphonse got it. His den is littered with what look like human remains. Congealed blood covers the altars and ju-jus. Rasaki later tells me Alphonse uses human-body parts for his magic, which he buys at a special place in a local market. Now, if someone has done

harm", continues Alphonse, "I use this African gun. It's made of a human thigh bone with bottles containing ju-ju soil attached to it.

I put the name of the bad person in the bone. Even if he is very far away in Europe he will get a terrible pain in his side". Alphonse has ju-jus for a huge array of ills and inconveniences. Should you be charged with murder. Alphonse will, for a small fee, take up his duck and lizard heads, which have been bound in pieces of cloth

from dead people. His spell will

ensure the charge is dropped.

The den is an Aladdin's cave of trinkets. Dolls, pictures, feathers, horse tails, animal skulls, bottles, beads and statues cover every surface. In the corner is a child's coffin, which squeaks when the lid is opened. I try to see if Alphonse has a squeaky toy in his hand but it's hard to tell.

"I'm not a Christian", says Alphonse, "I don't follow any particular religion. I believe in ju and in nature'

Before I leave, Alphonse gives me a magic parrot feather the has a cage full of parrots outside, along with some repulsive-looking rodents). Next time I come to Lagos, he says, I should bring a ring. This he will feed to a chameleon which he will lock up in the parrot's cage. When the chameleon dies, he will be opened up and the ring, by now bearing magic properties, will be extracted

and put on my finger. On the way home, Rasaki, a Muslim, says most Nigerians take ju-ju seriously. Soldiers, poficemen and politicians seek the fetishists' help. Rasaki believes God's power is best but that men like Alphonse are powerful and it's best not to upset them. Needless to say, I'm keeping my parrot feather

DAVID ORR

## **Ex-president** of Mexico attempts to clear name

Latin America Correspondent

For the first time since he fled Mexico in disgrace nine ment whence in disgrace time as was held on suspicion of can president. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, is lighting back. He claims he is the riction of a Massieri, the PRI's secrepower struggle lettreen hard tary general and former himsing since since si ing Institutional Revolution Salinas She, too, is current-US-educated political and eco-

nomic reformers.

Mr Salinas who fled in March after his brother Ranl was arrested in connection with murder and he himself was blam ed for Mexico's financial crisis, faxed a long statement to Mexican media on Monday night. Said to have been sent from



Carlos Salinas: Claims to

be victim of power tussie Cuba, where he was last seen, it accused another former president, Luis Echeverria, of a campaign to discredit him and his policies of political and economic opening. Even though Mr Salinas was clearly trying to deflect criticism, his remarks struck a chord among many Mexicans who increasingly see the entire PRI-controlled system as corrupt.

Mr Salinas denied responsibility for the economic crisis and said he had been unaware of any criminal activities by his brother. He attributed the scandal surrounding his family to a "tremendous struggle for pow-er in Mexico" and specifically to a "political offensive" by

Locals are billing it the Battle of the Old Dinosaurs versus the Baby Dinosaurs - the PRI's old guard against its youn ger technocrats, symbolised by Mr Salinas and his successor, President Ernesto Zedillo. Mr Zedillo, close to Mr Salinas throughout his career, has made no comment on his predecessor's statement.

Mr Salinas was praised at home and abroad when he hand. ed over the presidential sash to Mr Zedillo on 1 December last year and was on the verge of the coveted appointment as head of the new World Trade Organisation. His reputation simped

later and Mr Zedillo blamed nation's financial problems.

... Then, in February, Raul Salialleged banking fraud.

In March, Carlos Salinas fied first to New York, then to Montreal and now, reportedly, to the protection of his old friend,

His flight led many to suspect him of involvement in an earlier assassination, that of the PRI's original presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio in Timana in March 1994. Others believed PRI hardliners were behind the killing, fearing Colosio would ex-pand Mr Salinas's political and free-market economic open-ings and cut into their traditional power base and wealth.

In his statement, Mr Salinas came close to accusing Mr Echevernia, president from 1970 -76 of involvement in the Colosio murder. "A few hours after the painful death of my dear friend Luis Donaldo Colosio, former president Luis Echev erria showed up unaunounced at my office with great urgency to propose his candi-date. Obviously, it was not Dr Ernesto Zedillo," he wrote.

"Nothing that has hap-peued in Mexico this year is unconnected to a tremendous struggle for power. What has been at stake here is what sort of nation will prevail. I am ready to make myself available to any inquiry."

The former president did not

comment on the murder charge charges that Raul Salmas built up a forume while working for a government food distribution agency with a salary of around £50,000 a year. He wrote: "My brother Raul's deception is unacceptable. From the beginning of my adminis-tration, I asked him to abstain from participating in business deals. I never knew of such activities."

Raul Salinas's wife, Paulina, was arrested in Switzerland last month as she tried to withdraw cash from a \$84m bank account believed to have been set up by Raul Salinas using an alias: The Swiss had apparently been tipped off by the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), who believe the account contained laundered money from drug dealing. Mexican authorities say they have traced 48 bank accounts to Raul Salinas and 44 properties. Scotland Yard is said to be helping the Mexican authorities with inquiries into "a murder and money-laundering," apparently after a \$20m bank account was discovered in London under an alias allegedly used by Raul Salinas.

### ADVERTISEMENT

## THE CONVICTION OF KEN SARO-WIWA

On 8th November, 1995, the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) upheld the death sentences passed on Mr. Ken Saro-Wiwa, and eight others on 30th and 31st October, 1995, by the Ogoni Civil Disturbances Tribunal headed by Justice Ibrahim Auta, a renowned Judge of the Federal Court of Appeal, for the gruesome murder of four prominent Ogoni sons, on 21st May, 1994. Six other accused persons were freed, including Ledum Mitee, the Vice-President of MOSOP. Since the sentences were passed there have been both local and international reactions to the verdict. While been both local and international reactions to the verdict. While some of the reactions have been pleas for clemency, others have been full of vitriolic fulminations, designed to trivialise a very serious murder charge which claimed the precious lives of four prominent Ogoni sons, in a most barbaric, inhuman and despicable manner.

It is true that Ken Saro-Wiwa is a foremost writer of international repute, who during the Nigerian civil war served as one of the youngest Commissioners in the Executive Council of Navy Commander Alfred Diete Spiff, the then Governor of Rivers State. It is also true that the four Prominent Ogoni sons who were murdered on 21st May, 1994, had equally enviable credentials or pedigree. Mr. Albert Badey was a one-time Permanent Secretary, State Commissioner and later, Secretary to the Rivers State Government; Chief E. N. Kobani was a former State Commissioner, former Deputy President of MOSOP, and former National Publicity Secretary of the defunct Social Democratic Party (SDP); Chief Samuel Orage was a one-time State Commissioner and Chief T. B. Orage was Secretary to the Gokana Council of Chiefs.

3. What is more? These four prominent sons of Ogoniland were among the founders of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), which was formed in 1990 and originally conceived as a pressure group that would use non-violent methods to protect the Ogoni people from the environmental degradation caused by oil exploitation and exploration in their areas. In fact, its first President. Mr Garrick Leton, a former Federal Commissioner escaped being killed because he was not present at the scene of the barbaric murder. Otherwise, nearly all the foundation members would have been completely wiped out by a group of terrorists and bandits under the umbrella of the National Youth Council of Ogoni People (NYCOP) formed by Saro-Wiwa as the Youth Wing

Ken Saro-Wiwa, who is now being widely acclaimed as the leader of MOSOP was not among its original founders. It was after its formation that he requested to be made its spokesman/ambassador in charge of Public Affairs to enable him to deal with the Press, given his wide contacts with the local and international media. Together, they produced the Ogoni bill of rights. But Ken Saro-Wiwa had his own agenda, unknown to the foundation members. In 1993, he mooted the idea of forming a Youth Wing within the movement but this was widely opposed by other members. Despite their opposition, he unilaterally formed the Youth Wing, which he called the National Youth Council of Ogoni People, promising its impressionable young members a lot of el dorado, such as huge bank accounts, palatial mansions and luxurious cars. The Youth Wing not only became militant in their approach to issues, they became a law unto themselves and unleashed a reign of terror as well as campaigns of calumny, blackmail, villification and destruction on the whole of Ogoniland, mounting over 150 road blocks.

5. Despite admonitions from the elders, which included those murdered in cold blood, that the Youth Wing which had illegally constituted itself into a vigilante group and a private Army of Ken Saro-Wiwa, be much more restrained and follow the movement's original methods of dialogue which the MOSOP had used effectively in the past, they continued their reign of terror with the promptings of Ken Saro-Wiwa, their Commander-in-Chief. When it became clear that the group had not only become uncontrollable but owed their loyalty only to Ken Saro-Wiwa, the original founders parted ways with him, and from then on he declared war on them and hijacked the leadership of MOSOP. It was this war that culminated in the gruesome murder of four prominent Ogoni sons during a meeting in the palace of their revered king. The only sins of the Great four was that they disagreed with Ken Saro-Wiwa over the tactics, and were later to pay dearly with their own lives. The build up to their tragic end was written, sealed and delivered by Ken Saro-Wiwa.

For instance, inflamatory exchanges between Ken and the big four also showed clearly that deep-seated animosity existed amongst them. For instance, on 27th November, 1993, Chief Edward Kobani, who was one of those murderd, in a letter addressed to the Rt. Rev. Bishop J. B. Poromon of the Methodist Church wrote en quote: "Ken Saro-Wiwa has a formidable army of trained thugs and hoodlums who are terrorising the whole of Ogoniland, destroying the lives and property of those he does not like in the attempt to emerge as the one and only Ogoni leader". Ken Saro-Wiwa replied in a letter dated 15th December, 1993 en quote: "I have noted how far your stock has fallen in the Ogoni Market. When will you accept responsibility for your failure. I cannot stop you from envying my achievements. I invite you to copy my ways and you will find that which you desire the most, Ken Saro-Wiwa image. Good advice and it's free". Such deep feelings of hatred were manifested in other correspondences between Ken Saro-Wiwa and other members killed on 21st May, 1994.

It was, therefore, not surprising when Justice Auta stated while sentencing Ken Saro-Wiwa to death that he (Saro-Wiwa) did not only counsel others to kill, he also prepared the grounds for the killing and organised NYCOP and some elements in MOSOP to carry out the dastardly murder of four prominent Ogoni sons. He added that his utterances, activities and actions before the killings were well rehearsed actions to carry out the killings for which he and his accomplices were, consequently, convicted.

8. There are so many truths being twisted by some misguided elements to discredit the Federal Government. First, before the brutal, unconscionable and condemnable murder of the four prominent Ogoni citizens, no single Ogoni man was being held for the non-violent expression of his views. To the contrary, the Federal Government in keeping with its policy of Freedon of Speech and association, allowed Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP to thrive as a pressure group which expressed its views freely from time to time. The views were sometimes considered on their own merit and taken into account by the Federal Government in Oil Policy formulations. Second, Ken Saro-Wiwa and others being tried were allowed access to the Counsels of their choice. There was delay after those Counsel withdrew. In accordance with the law, Government lawyers were picked to defend the

9. Third, they were never tried by either a special military tribunal nor a court-martial as was being bandied about. They were tried by a Special Tribunal recognised in law and headed by a renowned Judge of the Federal Court of Appeal. In fact, it is a cardinal legal principle that laws should be interpreted as they are and not as they should be to meet selfish interests. Special Tribunals are recognised under the Nigerian Judicial system and function like normal courts. Their principal purpose is to speed up the dispensation of justice.

10. Ken Saro-Wiwa's life is no more precious than the lives of the four prominent Ogoni citizens murdered in cold blood simply because they disagreed with Ken Saro-Wiwa over the tactics of achieving their goals. The families of the four slain Ogonis expect justice, albeit for the latters selfish ends. Ken Saro-Wiwa was not sentenced to death because of his quest for a fair deal for his people or for environmental matters, he was sentenced to death for the cruel murder of four prominent Ogoni sons. Those who were murdered on 21st May, 1994 are no lesser beings than Ken Saro-Wiwa. He produced the monster that eventually consumed him.

11. The attempt by some critics to compare the fate of the coup plotters with that of the convicts by Justice Auta's Ogoni Civil Disturbances Tribunal is misguided. The two cases are completely different. The Saro-Wiwa's case is clearly criminal, involving murder. The penalty for such an offence which was not made by the Military but has always been part of Nigeria statute-book is clear. The penalty has been duly imposed. And there is no apology to offer anyone. It is true that many countries today like South Africa and the United Kingdom bave removed death penalty from their statute-book. Nigeria has not yet done so. Consequently, for a country to seek to impose its own legal system on another smacks of undue interference and until the death sentence is removed from Nigeria's statute-book, the confirmation of the death sentences passed by the Tribunal is in order and well deserved.

Nigeria High Commission on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria Abuja, Nigeria.



:hoices

Flower Show garden in 1988. His most recent success was The Good Gardens Guide, which

he edited with Peter King. Con-

troversy surrounded the guide's first appearance in 1990, be-

cause the editors ranked gar-

dens on a star system, rather as

if the book were a restaurant

guide. Rose relished the ensu-

ing altercations and was, as al-ways, forthright in defence of his

His introduction to the 1996

guide shows how his delight in human subterfuge never di-

minished. Owners, he writes.

will go to considerable lengths to ob-

tain star rating this year one threat-

publication if a star was not forth-coming. Since we do not believe we have any competition, this did not

Many people in the garden-

ing world have reason to be grateful to Graham Rose, for he was generous in helping those at the beginning of their careers. It was often be who dropped the

necessary word in the right quarter. Geoff Hamilton first

met him 21 years ago and re-

members how Rose recom-mended him for his first big job

in journalism, which was gar-

dening correspondent on the

Mail on Sunday.

He also remembers taking a

load of plants from Hilliers out

to Rose's house near Carcas-

sonne in France. There was

some muddle about the correct

papers for the consignment

and a customs inspector called

at the house. Hamilton watched

in awe as Rose, who spoke

liquid, emphatic French, "charmed the man out of his

socks". The problem over the

papers dissipated in a haze of

Graham John Rose, gardener and

gardening writer: born Newcustle upon Tyne 28 January 1928;

agricultural correspondent, Sunday Times: 1968-78, gardening correspondent 1978-95; married 1953 Catherine Degrais (marring dissolved), 1967 Dorothy Gold-

**Graham Rose** 

Graham Rose, for 17 years gar-dening correspondent of the Sunday Times, had a glorious

political incorrectness that

made his company a delight.

Wherever the laughter was

most uproarious at a gathering of gardening writers, you could

be sure that Rose would be at

He was a striking figure, tail, dark, slightly Bohemian in his

dress, forthright in his lan-guage. I read him long before

I met him. His column took you

more often than anyone else's

into uncharted gardening ter-

ritory. He was not one to toe the

line, to trot out the expected

coverage, the received opinion.

That was one of his great strengths. He ploughed his own furrow and did not much care

whether other people approved

After taking a degree at King's College, Durham, he

became an entomologist, work-ing first with ICI in India and then for Universal Crop Pro-tection. He made himself an ex-

pert in methods of spraying and

for more than 10 years was a

consultant to Micron, who

pioneered spinning disc sprayers which regulated the

size of droplet needed for any

particular target.
In the late Sixties, he joined

the Sunday Times, working for

10 years as the paper's agricul-

tural correspondent. Later, he moved on from silage making

to meadow gardening with scarcely a hiccup. In more im-pecunious times he had used his

powerful voice to good effect as

an uncredited voice-over in horror films. It was this perhaps

that earned him the nickname

He was a prolific author, producing books on a wide range of horticultural subjects.

Landscape with Weeds, pub-

lished in 1980, gave a high-

spirited account of his attempt

to establish a new garden round

his country home in Oxfordshire

(he also had a roof garden in London). The Sunday Times Book of Woodland and Wild-

"Воотег".

or not

the centre of the noise.

# obituaries/gazette Woytec Lowski

Woytec Lowski was a Polish dancer who enjoyed a distinguished career with Maurice Béjart's Ballet of the 20th Century, Roland Petit's Ballet of Marseilles, and the Boston Ballet. A severe hip injury ended his dancing career when he was in his prime, but he used his musical gifts and knowledge of dance resourcefully to become a first-rate teacher and coach.

Lowski was born Woiciech Wiesidlowski in 1939, in Brzesc. He studied at the National School of Opera Ballet in Warsaw and was granted a scholarship to continue studies at the Leningrad Choreographic Ac-ademy. Returning to Poland he joined the National Ballet in Warsaw, where he soon became a soloist. However he was not content; he would have liked to have been an actor and felt the roles allotted to him were not giving full rein to his abilities.

In 1964 he competed in the first Varna International Ballet competition. Facing stiff opposition from Soviet artists be managed to acquire a silver medal, while gold medals went to Vladimir Vasiliev (only winner of the Grand Prix), Nikita Dolgushin and Serge Vikulov. Disillusioned by the Warsaw management's lack of interest and having become acquainted with the international scene in Varna, he made efforts to quit the Warsaw Ballet.

In 1966 he succeeded in getting free from Poland and arriving in Brussels, he joined

Béjart's Ballet of the 20th Century. He stayed for five years with the company, establishing himself with a powerful rendering of Tybalt in Béjart's Romeo and Juliet. Béjart created a number of roles for him in his ballets Baudelaire, Le Cygne, Les Quatre Fils de Aymon and Lettem Amomsa

Lowski toured extensively with Béjart's ballet; then, in 1971, he joined Roland Petit's Ballet de Marseilles. He staved two seasons with them, creating roles in Mayakovsky and Pink Flow. After appearing with the Cologne Opera Ballet in 1972 he joined the Boston Ballet in the United States, with whom he danced the title role in Balanchine's Prodigal Son. Taking leave of absence in 1976 be danced with the Ballet Internationale under Ben Stevenson's direction, in South Africa. Returning to Boston he took a leading role in Agnes de Mille's Fall River Legend. He per-formed a Hamlet choreographed by Lorenzo Monreal and appeared in the same choreographer's Carmina

Burana. It was during this time that he damaged his hip, which gradually became arthritic and put an end to his dancing days. Undannted, he turned to teaching and once again in Europe he freelanced, assisting Rosella Hightower in Cannes, and in Italy. In 1982 he returned to the United States teaching at the School of American Ballet. His

teaching was recognised as of a

high order and he was in constant demand. In Europe he became ballet master of the Ballet of Flanders in Antwerp under the direction of Valeri Panov, with whom he helped to bring a discipline to the company.

During this period he coached a French boy, Yannick Bocquin, and a Belgian, Koen Onzia, for the Paris International Competition; both dancing Panov's brilliant choreographies were awarded respectively gold and silver

In 1968 he came to England, when I saw him give a class at the Royal Ballet School. I was impressed by his musicality and sense of style, but some years later I watched him teaching the English National Ballet and found he had changed his method considerably. When I questioned him, he replied: "One must adapt to the director's requirements."

He spent the last years of his life with the English National Company serving under three successive artistic directors, Peter Schaufuss, Yvan Nagy and Derek Deane. When he became ill from an Aids-related illness, he tried to escape from himself, teaching for a while in Italy, thence returning to London and eventually to Warsaw.

John Gregory Woiciech Wiesidlowski (Woytec Lowski), dancer and ballet master: born Brzesc, Poland II October 1939; died Warsaw 24



## **Albert Ouzoulias**

On 2 August 1941, Albert Ou-zoulias had a rendezvous in the carry out their instructions to certain who gave the order, it seems likely that the decision restaurant La Closerie des Lilas in Montparnasse. There he met Danièle Casanova and another official of the Communist Party, who told him that the Jeunesses Communistes, of which he had been a leading member before the Second World War, was creating several fighting groups called Bataillons de la Jeunesse. He was told that

he was to be in charge of them. Later that day, again following instructions, Ouzoulias met Pierre Georges, who was known as "Frédo" and was later to be known as "Colonel Fabien". It was at this meeting at the Métro be direct attacks on the Ger- Chateaubriant, in Brittany), it station Duroc that they dis- mans (but it still remains un-

go into action and kill German

Ouzoulias was 26 and Frédo only 22. Ouzoulias had fought with the French army in 1940 and had been captured, but he twice escaped from his prisoner-of-war camp, and the second escape caught the attention of the Party. Frédo had fought in Spain, and was reputed to have strangled one of the French guards who arrested him as a Communist in 1939. It was certain that under the leadership of these two experienced fighters there would

was taken by Moscow, the German attack on the Soviet Union having started in June 1941).

Ouzoulias later told how difficult it was to persuade Party members that they should learn to use revolvers when, for most of them, the Resistance had hitherto consisted of distributing tracts or attending secret meetings. But a number of German soldiers were killed, and, although this form of resistance was soon stopped as the Germans organised reprisals (the most infamous being the execution of 27 Communists at government of Vichy was made to seem more closely allied to the Germans.

It also led to the creation of a Communist fighting group in February 1942, the Francs-Tireurs et Partisans, under the direction of Charles Tillon. Ouzoulias became its military director, and was responsible for operations. He worked with Colonel Rol-Tanguy, the head of the Resistance movement in the Ile-de-France, and they planned for a rising in Paris. Their forces were vital to the liberation of Paris in August 1944, together with General Lecierc's armed brigade and the diplomatic interventions of the

for integrating Resistance forces into the regular armies as the war continued. After the war he was elected to the Municipal Council in Paris but, with his former leader Charles Tillon, a minister in de Gaulle's government, he was entrusted with various missions, in particular with regard to the French army in Indo-China. As a war hero and Communist he had easy relations with the forces of Ho Chi Minh, which he continued after the French

In 1970 Ouzoulias became mayor of Palisse in Corrèze and lived there in semi-retirement. He had started life as a post of-

had withdrawn.

Ouzoulias was responsible fice worker, joining the Communist Party in 1933. He was a popular figure, known as "Ouzou", although after the war people still called him "Colonel André", which was his Resistance name and rank. He was a discreet man, and his critics have said that his loyalty was first to the Party, only then to his country. But he received all the honours of the Republic and was regarded as one of the last heroes of the Resistance.

Donglas Johnson

Albert Georges Ouzoulias, wartime resister: born Contrevoz, Ain 20 January 1915; married Cécile Romagon, died 27 November 1995.



Matityahu Shmuelevitz

flower Gardening grew out of the bach (née Dodd); died London paper's acclaimed Chelsea 3 December 1995.

Marityahu Shmuelevitz won Shmuelevitz was sentenced to fame or notoriety not as a leading aide of the former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin but as a daring leading member of Lehi Freedom Fighters. The Stern Gang, as their opponents called them, were more extreme even than Begin's Irgun in the underground fight against the British Mandatory government of Palestine, and Shmuelevitz beeyes not only of the British but of the official leaders of the Yishuv, the Jewish community such as David Ben-Gurion.

Inspired by the charismatic the British in 1942, Lehi were ruthless in their activities and did not shrink from assassinations, as they showed when in 1944 they gunned down the first Lord Moyne in Cairo, a deed which horrified the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann and the Zionist Winston Churchill.

Though not prepared to accept Lehi's tactics, Begin was keen to co-operate with the group, whom he described as partners, in attacks on the British targets. He also offered to save the life of Shmuelevitz. who had first been imprisoned by the British in 1940, escaped in 1943, but was wounded and Photograph: Jon Jones | recaptured a year later. When Aviv 2 December 1995.

death for firing at a British officer and carrying arms, Begin proposed a joint plan to attack the Jerusalem Central Prison to free him. The plan was about due to be carried out when the death sentence was commuted.

Shmuelevitz and his group participated with Begin's Irgun in the most daring of all their joint operations - the Palestine, and Shmuelevitz be-came a notorious figure in the storming of Acre jail in May 1947. Many of the attackers were wounded or killed after the withdrawal. Begin prints in his book The Revolt (1949) Shmuelevitz's description of the disaster that befell the group and also Abraham Stern, shot dead by the accusation that British troops shot wounded men.

Like another leader of Lehi, Yitzhak Shamir, who went on to become Prime Minister. Shmuelevitz became a respected member of Israeli society. After joining the Likud party. he became a devoted and close aide to Begin, its leader, in the final years of his life.

Shmuelevitz's last activity was far removed from war. He was playing chess when he collapsed.

Joseph Finklestone Matityahu Shmuelevitz, activisi and politician: born Poland 1920: married (two daughters); died Tel

Sata watch

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## Mark Renzland

Refer to "the twins" and anyone in the London restaurant business will know you mean Max and Mark Renzland. They came on the scene in 1989, when they opened the first of their three restaurants. Chez Max in Richmond. Chefs and food writers, the likes of Jeremy Round, Elizabeth David and Simon Hopkinson, were almost immediately through their door and enchanted by the twins, the food and the place itself.

Max tended front of house. Mark cooked. They loved the dash, steam and clatter of restaurants. There were frequent queues and confusion, as if they actively preferred chaos. Certainly a loval band of customers did not come for smooth service. Both twins were giddily passionate about French bistro food, a dozen quivering ovsters, the perfect roast chicken, juicy terrines with gherkins, rabbit in mustard sauce with lentils, the densest and richest

little cheeses. There was no lit-Customers realised only gradthe Renzland brothers were phony, that they were half-German, half-English, that they were, in fact, from Colchester. The fittings, however, were

authentic. The tulip-shaped lamps, the art nouveau bentwood frontage, even the ashtrays were lovingly collected by the brothers, piece by piece, in France. Produce was shipped in from Lyons and Rungis market. Even the red wine sauce was made with the best burgundies. Their enthusiasm exceeded their means, and it was not long before the first Chez Max closed abruptly, when HM Customs and Excise seized the fixtures and fittings for non-payment of VAT

During the early Nineties, their smiles dropped. Spurned by angry suppliers and rebuffed

pot au chocolat, perfectly ripe by various investors, they spent more than a year in the cold. the hilarity involved in serving it. Then, by 1992, they re-emerged with a quixotic restaurant share ually that the French accents of in Hampton Wick. By day it was a greasy spoon called Bonzo's. By night it was "Le Petit Max": an unlicensed bistro serving better French food than one finds in France. Again, Mark

cooked and Max managed. In 1994, they opened a third restaurant, again called Chez Max, on Ifield Road in west London. Again, it was charming, but the strain began to show. In place of their mischievous charm some customers began simply to sense mischief. There were long delays, cheeky excuses. However, the food, again, was perfect. One former colleague says, They had their shortcomings down to an art form at Le Petit Max. They became attractions instead of faults. What happened, when they took their

second one, not only did Chez

George Monck, first Duke of Albe-

Max not come off, but Le Petit Max suffered as well.' Certainly Mark Renzland lost his way towards the end. His

ebullience faded. Unlike his brother, he could not control his weight. He became prey to melancholy. What had begun as a passion became a job, one of the most difficult there is involving long hours, heat, stress and loneliness. When he died late last Wednesday, it was just as family, friends and colleagues were begging him to take a long rest. Restaurateurs mourning his death might consider doing two things; restructuring their rotas so chefs have more livable hours, then toasting Mark Renzland with something exceptional. A 1961 Hermitage La Chapelle would be appropriate.

**Emily Green** 

Mark Renzland, restaurateur born Colchester, Essex 14 November 1956; died London 29 November 1995.

Attorney General's Reference No 3 of 1994; Court of Appeal (Lord Taylor of Gosforth, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Kay and and Mrs Justice Steel); 24 November 1995

Murder or manslaughter can be committed where unlawful ineither to a child in utero or to a mother carrying a child in utero where the child is subsequently born alive but dies thereafter and the injuries inflicted while in utero caused or substantially contributed to the death. The fact that the death of the child was caused solely in consequence of injury to the mother rather than as a consequence of injury to the foctus did not negative any li-ability for murder and man-

slaughter provided the jury were satisfied that causation was proved. The Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) gave judgment on the Attorney General's

reference. The respondent stabbed his girlfriend who was pregnant with his child in the abdomen. The girlfriend recovered but about two weeks later she went into labour and gave birth to a premature child who survived for 120 days. The respondent was charged with murder of the

### LAW REPORT

even if a causal link between the wounding and the death were proved, the facts could not give rise to a conviction for ither murder or manslaughter. Robert S. Smith QC and David Calvert-Smith (CPS) for the Attorney General; Simon Hawkesworth OC and Andrew Lees (Registrar of

Lord Taylor CJ. giving the court's opinion, said that the prosecution had to prove seven elements. In a case such as the present the elements that the defendant did an act and

just as unlawful as any assault on any part of the mother. A doctor who carried out an abortion in accordance with the Abortion Act 1967 was not acting unlawfully and hence, were he to be charged with murder,

The fourth element was that

his acquittal on the basis that of death. On medical evidence

a jury might properly be so sat-isfied. The fifth element was that the death must be of a person in being. In its simplest form that meant that to cause the death of a foetus in the womb could not be murder. However there was no requirement that the person who died needed to be a person in being at the time that the act causing death was perpetrated. The sixth element that the death must result within a year and a day provided an arbitrary time-limit.

The seventh element, the mental element of the crime of murder, was that at the time of doing the act the defendant intended either to kill or to cause really serious bodily injury to the victim, or, subject to the extent of the doctrine of transferred malice, to some other person.

The court rejected the concept of an intention directed towards a child capable of becoming a person in being. That was not to say that if an intention was directed towards the foctus a charge of murder must fail. An intention to cause child. The trial judge directed the act was a substantial cause foetus was an intention to serious bodily injury to the

a part of the mother. Consideration of whether a

dant's intention was exclusively the foetus fell to be considered under the head of transferred malice as was the case where the intention was focused exclusively or partially on the mother.

Malice could not be transferred until such time as the act affected the victim. There was no reason to hold that malice could only be transferred where the person to whom it was transferred was in existence at the time of the act causing the death.

If the mode of death was utterly remote, that could be regarded as severing the chain of causation but it should not matter whether the child died after birth as a result of a stab wound suffered by the foetus before birth or as a result of premature birth induced by the stabbing. The same ap-

to a charge of manslaughter.

Ying Hui Tan, Barrister

### ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen, Patron, opens the new campus of University of Westmanster, Harrow, Middles and, as Colonel-in-Chief, lunches with the offic and, as Cólonel-in-Chief, lunches with the officers of the Queen's Luncahure Regement in the Officers Meas, St. James's Paken. The Prince of Viales, President, Business in the Community, which hallowood Park, Rumoorn, Cheshire, in view an explaintion of the past and present buildings of the estate, meet reedents and bour the estate, opens the National Beamin Resource Centre at Trafford Hall, Wambolds Trafford, near Chesters; as President, the Prince's Turst, visits the Chester Fer Station and meets members of the Prince's Turst Volunteers, beamfoliajes of the achieme, promotes and fire officers actively irreduced in the achieme, and the sale of the Prince's Turst Volunteers, presentation of a cheque for the hund Rank's Prook Street, Chester, attends a meeting of the travit, Advince Network and alterward meets young businessmen at the Maryland Business (North America, Chester, The Frincess of Maies, Patron, England National Ballet, opens the English National Ballet, School at Carrier Building, London SW10. The Princess Raymi opens are wiffer of the Department of Social Security in the Cornhill Shopping Centre, Strond, Giouses erribure, as Patron, the National America, Society estated the Talton, the National America, Society (Giousester, Patron, the Mainsel, America, Society (Giousester, Advice Bureaux, visits Strond Chizens Advice Bureaux, Patron Bull, Strond, The Duke of Giousester stitunds a reception to smart, the fifth of Giousester stitunds a reception to smart, the fifth of Giousester stitunds a reception to smart, the fifth and Giousester stitunds a reception to smart, the fifth of Giousester stitunds a reception to smart, the fifth of Street of Street

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Repr mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Home Gr Ham; Is Buitaking The Queen's Lancastine intent mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buelding

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memo-rial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memorlam) should be sent in writing tte Editor, The Ind I Canada Square, Capary Wharf, Lon-don E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette amountements must be submitted in writing and are charged at £10 a line, VAT entra. Please inc

### Birthdays

Ashley of Stoke, former MP, 73; The Right Rev Patrick Barry, Abbot of Ampleforth, 78; Lt-Col Sir Charles Brown Bt. former Deputy Lieu tenant, North Riding of Yorkshire 93; Mr Dave Brubeck, jazz musician 75; Vice-Admiral Sir John Cadell, dis trict general manager, Canterbury and Thanet Health Authority, 66; Lord Clinton-Davis, former MP, 67; Air Marshal Sir John Curtiss, 71; Miss Wendy Ellis, ballerina, 44; Lord Em slie, former Lord Justice-General of Scotland, 76: Earl Granville, former Lord-Lieutenant, Islands Area of the Western Isles, 77; Miss Jill player, 44; Mr Geoffrey Hoon MP, 42; Miss Tessa Kennedy, interior decorator, 57; Mr Jonathan King, broad-caster and producer, 51; Mrs Helen Liddell MP, 45; Sir Richard Lloyd, chairman, Vickers plc, 67; Sir Nicholas Lyell QC MP, Attorney Gener-al, 57; The Right Rev Professor Eric Mercer, former Bishop of Exeter, 78; Sir Martin Moore-Bick, High Court judge, 49; Mr Anthony Morey, deputy High Commissioner to India, 59; Mr Eric Newby, writer, 76; Sir George Pinker, gynaecological surgeon, 71; Professor Lord Porter of Luddenham, Chairman of the Centre for Photomolecular Sciences, 75; Mr Keke Rosberg, motor-racing champion, 47; Mr Richard Shepherd MP, 53; Professor Sir Bryan Thwaites, former Principal, Westfield College, London University, 72; Mr Charles Vance, actor, director and producer, 66; The Right Rev Peter

Anniversaries Births: Henry VI, King, 1421; Baldassarre Castiglione, courtier, 1478;

marle, admiral and general, 1608; Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of India, 1732; Louis-Joseph Mrs Janet Anderson MP, 46: Lord Gay-Lussac, chemist and physicist, 1778: The Rev Richard Harris Barbam ("Thomas Ingoldsby"), hu-morist and author, 1788; Charles Martin Hall, chemist, 1863; Sir Fran-Martin Hall, chemist, 1863; Sir Francis Osbert Schewerell Sitwell Bt, writer, 1892; Sylvia Townsend Warner, novelist, 1893; Ira Gershwin (Israel Gershwin), lyricist, 1896. Deaths: Afonso I Heuriques of Portugal, after a reign of 73 years, 220 days, 1185; Dr John Lightfoot, elergyman and scholar, 1675; Jean-Baptiste Simeon Chardin, painter, 1779; Dr Joseph Black, chemist, 1799; Anthony Trologe, novelist and Post Office official lope, novelist and Post Office official 1882; Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, 1889; Ernst Werner von Siemens, inventor, 1892; Stella Benson, novelist, 1933; Roy Orbison (Kelton), popular singer and composer, 1988; Timku Abdul Rahman, first prime minister of Malaya, 1990; Don Ameche (Dominic Felix Amici), actor, 1993. On this day: Christopher Columbus discovered Hispaniola (now Haiti and Dominican Repub-lic), 1492; Sir Colin Campbell's men defeated the Sepoy mutineers at the Battle of Cawnpore, 1857; the Irish Free State was established, 1922; the Libyan frontier agreement was signed between Egypt and Italy, 1925; India recognised Bangladesh as an independent republic, 1971; war broke out between India and Pakistan. 1971: Gerald Ford was sworn in as US Vice-President, 1973; Britain's first heart and lung transplant was made, 1983; Egon Krenz was ousted as head of state of East Germany, 1989. Today is the Feast Walker, former Bishop of Ely, 76; Mr Peter Willey, cricketer, 46. Day of St Ahraham of Kratia, St Asella, Saints Dionysia, Majoricus and their Companions, St Gertrude the Elder and St Nicholas of Bari.

### Lectures

National Gailery: Christophe Brown, "In Trust for the Nation (iii): Dutch and Flemish Paintings in the Exhibition", 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Imo-

gen Stewart, "Christianity: Coptic textiles", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Sarah Greenberg, "Decline and Fall: poeny and painting in Turner's images of Carthage", lpm. British Museum: Jacques Paul, "The Greek Herm: a cultural symbol",

Gresham College, Barnard's Inn Hall, London EC2: Professor Susan Greenfield, "Exploring the Brain: little grey cells", 1pm.

### Luncheons

Mr Michael Forsyth MP, Secretary of State for Scotland, and Mrs Forsyth hosted a kurcheon yesterday in Dover House, Whitehall, London SWI, on the occasion of the visit to London of the Right Rev James Harkness, r of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

### Dinners

Royal Scots Dragoon Guards King Constantine of Greece was present at the Annual Regimental Dinner of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards held yesterday evening at the Cavalry and Guards Club, London Wl. Major-General Chartes Ramsay Colonel of the Regiment, presided

## Comings by Club

The Chairman and Officers of the Committee of the Coningsby Club yesterday evening hosted their Christmas Dinner at the Carlton Club, London SW1. Mr Alan Clark was guest of honour and soeaker. Mr

## Child can be murdered by injury to mother

Criminal Appeals) for the respondent.

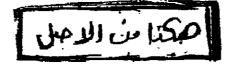
that the act was deliberate and not accidental were simply a matter of evidence. The third element was that the act was unlawful. In law the foetus was treated as a part of the mother until it had a separate existence of its own. To cause injury to the foetus was

the charge would fail.

charge of murder could arise where the focus of the defen-

proach was required in relation The court would have ruled

that there was a case to go to the jury, but it was far from clear that a jury was likely to be satisfied on the issue of causation.



How many gold medals will £100m buy? Paul Vallely and Jim White look at the plan for a national academy of sport

## A place where the nation can make heroes

Sport has always been a barometer of national selfimage. This week it is Mike Atherton being offered as a metaphor for the grit, determination and stubbornness we would all like to see in ourselves in these troubled times. "He makes you proud to be English," Terry Venables was quoted as saying in the Sun.

The notion has considerable edigree. There are those who feel that Harold Wilson only lost the 1970 general election because England's footballers had just been knocked out of the World Cup.

John Major wants to make sure the same thing doesn't happen to him. Yesterday the Sports Council announced the next stage in realising the Prime Minister's dream of creating a new generation of Atherions by establishing a £100m national academy of sport. Some 10,000 consultation documents are to be sent out to sporting bodies, cians, and, oh yes, to the athletes themselves, seeking their views on a project which is to be funded, of course, by the National Lottery.

thu Shme

British sportsmen and women have long envied the? opportunities enjoyed by their The United States has sporting facilities on its college cam-puses which are legendary, and which have for decades drawn many of the pick of British performers. But in recent times other nations have consciously established programmes, funded at great expense from the public purse, to nucture practitioners who will excel on

the world stage.

Germany, following the post-war example of the countries of Eastern Europe, set up

a tennis academy in the Sev-enties from which Steffi Graf, Michael Stich and Bons Becker graduated. Sweden did something similar with tennis, and with football, in which it has rapidly left behind its joke-

But the most dramatic example of sporting improvements nurtured by a state-sponsored academy is the Australian Institute of Sport, in Canberra. Set up after a series of disastrous performances in the 1976 Olympics, it has produced a turnaround that can be characterised, even without the usual sporting hyperbole, as

team virtually straight out of In a world where the difference between a gold and silver medal can be measured in minuscule fractions, the finetuning available in such an

as many golds as England, Scot-land, Wales and Northern Ire-

land put together at last year's

Commonwealth Games, with

just a third of the population.

Nine out of 10 medallists were

products of the Institute - as

unstoppable leg spinner, entered the Australian Test

establishment can mean the difference between success and failure. Teams of nutritionists. physiologists, psychologists, psychotherapists and biomechanics experts offer gait analysis and muscle powerratio studies. They will instruct are many top cricket and rugby a hurdler on which muscle in players. Shane Warne, the lower calf to develop to ensure crucial performance improvements, or make minute adjustments to the detailed timing of exercise routines to

optimise training benefits. British athletes who can afford to go there during the winter season - they include the 400-metre runner Roger Black, the rower Steve Redgrave, the 110-metres hurdler Colin Jackson and the sprinter Linford Christie - speak of "a little paradise for serious athletes".

Sport has always been a serious business, and never more so than today. For sport is one of the main ways in which a nation can redefine its image in the world.

When New Zealand won the America's Cup earlier this year. the entire country donned red socks in homage to Peter Blake. the boat's captain, who had sported the same. More significantly, New Zealand businessmen touring the Far East in

search of inward investment proudly display pictures of the winning team on their brechures.

Ocean-going racing might be one of the least spectatorfriendly activities invented, but clearly it is an important marketing tool when it comes to finding a symbol of the enterprise, determination and character that enabled this tiny nation to trounce the world's

only sailing superpower. No longer. Mr Major believes, can Britain afford to treat sport as something only to be played on Wednesday afternoons. The old stereotype of

pressed in the opposite directradition of Oxbridge Blues and insouciant grace, must finally be laid to rest. If the birth of the professional sportsman in Britain came comparatively late, all the more reason to run hard now for the finish-

The problem that the Prime Minister is attempting to address, however, will not be solved simply by focusing on an elite. The move to supply the academy with recruits from the nation's playing fields brings ministers up to the emburrassing realisation that previous Conservative initiatives have

tion. School sports fields were sold of during the Thatcher years. That was also the time when teachers, alienated by ministers, lack of trust, abandoned, along with their sense of vocation, much of their extranever recovered.

Deprived of facilities and goodwill, how could young English schoolboys compete with the opportunities given to someone like the England cricketer Robin Smith, who, when he was a boy in South Africa, attended an ordinary state school which had no fewer than 12 grass cricket nets with practice every night? When, a few years ago, the MCC launched an initiative to promote the game, they found only two primary schools in Greater London that still played ericket.

There's the rub. In Sweden. Germany and the United States they did not simply improve opportunities for the elite. They built scores of indoor tennis and football facilities for the mass of the population.

For there is another crucial dimension to the sporting experience. Beyond that of the circuit-hardened professional. or of the effortless exertions of the gentlemen players, lies something much more basic. Sport has primarily to be an activity that ordinary people enjoy without reference to national excellence. Without a base, a pyramid can have no

In the world of sport as international marketing, of course, no such excuses can be accepted. And in the forum of national polities, such plain truth cannot compete with the call for bread and circuses.

### View from the top: what the experts think of a new centre of sporting excellence



**Cliff Morgan** 

Union international Anything that gives people the opportunity to improve themselves is admirable. In Australia, they've got an academy and they produce wonderful athletes, and one hopes the same thing could happen in this country. But an academy won't teach flair and imagination and genius.



**Mickey Stewart** Former England

former Welsh Rugby



cricket manager l am all for a national academy because you need all the necessaries of sport science and sport medicine. On the plus side, having different sports together, one rubs off on another. On the other hand, each sport has its own character and atmosphere which develops its own individual environment.



**David Lloyd** 

Cup captain It is absolutely necessary as long as it's done professionally and looked at very carefully. It is something that should have been done many years ago, but it must be done right, otherwise it's a waste of time. It should be like Australia. Especially with all that lottery money. They've more money than



**Tony Hallett** Secretary of the Rugby

Football Union It's an excellent initiative which in rugby we're trying to do simultaneously under the main umbrella of the academy. I hope it will bring us closer to the competitive edge of other countries in the southern hemisphere and America too, which we've rather lacked in the



**Gary Jacobs** Former European

boxing champion it's a brilliant idea and not before time. The Government should take an interest. The kids in America manage to take on these sports scholarships and get a great education. They still excel in the classroom and get much better on the field.



**Terry Venables** England football coach

It's a great idea, It's good to monitor anything. If you monitor something, you can see if the kids involved are improving. Then you can concentrate on increasing the general standard all

Tuning in to watch the latter stages of Michael Atherton's elevation to sainthood on Monday, I found my attention wandering from the great man's performance (as it tends to do when eight runs are scored in an afternoon) and taking in some of the odd sights of South African cricket. The performance of the Soweto brass band in the stands, for instance, or the way Sky cameramen seem to be contractually obliged to scan the crowd for women in bikini tops; also the astonishing 3-D perspective of the Castle Lager advert painted on to the grass, a commercial optical illusion which makes you think the bowlers are going to trip over it every time they start their run-up.

Not that it was the only thing

around to trip up the South Africans. Now we are at last exposed to the country's sportsmen, it is alarming to discover the preponderence of the Mullet haircut among its cricketers. This long-at-the-back-short-at-thesides abomination popular in 1983 was thus named by Q magazine last month (though why the Mullet, no one, even at Q, can explain; sounds better than the bloater, presumably). The Mullet has long since been abandoned even by recalcitrant stylists like lan Botham. But, a bit like marsupials evolving away from the influences of the rest of the world, it is still the rage in so recently isolated Johannesburg.

Perhaps that was what was meant by

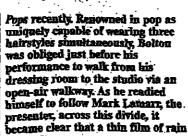
separate development.



After apartheid, the Mullet ...

.. and a bigger one from the man

The King of the Mullet, Michael Bolton, narrowly escaped a hair crisis when he appeared on Top of the



was falling. Before the singer could set foot ontside, the air was rent by a huge cry of "Michael! No!". One of his entourage, following behind, had realised the potentially cataclysmic consequences of mist meeting Mullef and roared his demand that Bolton wait in safety until an umbrella could be found. Michael Bolton: the only man in pop to travel with his own hair traffic controller.

It came as no surprise to a consumer called Bill Rich that in South Wales electricity has become big business. The week that workershareholders in SWALEC are trousering up to £21,000 in realised options as the company is absorbed by Welsh Water, the inappropriately named Mr Rich is entering his third year of dispute over his electricity bill. The problem is that Mr Rich and his family, in their escapist farmhouse in the middle of Powys, are reckoned by SWALEC to be running up the kind of charges more generally associated with market gardeners growing industrial quantities of cannabis

under are lamps. "The average bill in Wales is £273 per year, yet ours is up to £2,000," says Mr Rich, who has seen demands for more than £900 a quarter pop through his letter box. "And SWALEC" - which he pronounces to rhyme with bollock - "seem clueless as to why it happens." Mr Rich has been assiduous in his

efforts to find out why a household

that does not even possess a tumble-drier has been racheting up such extraordinary electricity use. Over the past couple of years his home has become a magnet for researchers: the electricity expert who reckoned it was a short circuit in the fridge (Mr Rich changed the fridge and the bills still came); the clammy-handed spiritualist who said it was the ghost of someone Bill had murdered in a past life popping round for a recharge (he had an exorcism and the bills still came); the conspiracy theorist who was convinced the meter was being affected by secret MoD experiments conducted locally into electronic warfare (call in the X-Files). The latest expert to befriend them is a retired electrical engineer called, I kid you not, DC Smith. Late one afternoon last week Mr Rich had the regulators from Offer. the electricity watchdog, round. "They

needed to switch off the supply in

recalled. "Naturally, it went dark, so

they had to fetch a torch from their

however, has been spinning as fast as

car. The batteries were flat." The

wheel of the newly fitted meter,

order to replace the meter," he

ever the old one did, for which no

Those unable at present to find a

explanation is yet forthcoming.
"We've agreed to pay SWALEC £1
a day until it's sorted out," Mr Rich said. "In the end I fear they'll make us pay the arrears. The only way I'll be able to afford that is to become a SWALEC shareholder."

suitable role for themselves, or who feel that their true worth is neglected by their employers, could do worse than pop over to Chicago. In the airport there, a local company is advertising that it can supply you with a "Video resume": a TV-CV, as it were. The copy gushes that a film crew "goes to your place of work and films you there. This gives the employer a sense of your work ethic." Even better: "if you are not currently employed, Career Videos will simulate a working environment in your area of expertise."

Sherrill Watson, the company's sales person, was momentarily nonplussed when I rang with my request to simulate the working environment of a roving ambassador of goodwill, a secret night visitor to the sick and dying, and a Queen of Hearts. Not to be defeated by a minor problem, however, Ms Watson asked if the offices of a local public relations company would suffice as a back-drop. Sounds perfect.

If Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, hoped her proposal to encourage schoolchildren to talk proper like what she does would be a vote winner, she should have consulted some of her constituents first. A colleague was in a pub in her South Norfolk constituency over the weekend, where she was harangued by the landlord for not speaking in an

East Anglian dialect. "I had that Gillian Shephard in here the other day," he growled. "An' I told 'er an' all. You get up at that Tory conference, I tellzer, tellin' folks to talk like zomeone from the bleedin BBC. Call yourself an East Anglian? I zezz. Destroying our 'eritage, that's what yurr doin'." God knows what he would have said to Virginia Bottomley.



## \* INDEPENDENT

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## Labour must do better with sums

The launch of Labour's new policy doc-I ument on schools yesterday marks a fundamental shift in the left's approach to education. For decades, under-achievement in Britain's schools has been too easily explained away by the social and eco-nomic background of the children involved. Schools in the inner cities were never expected to deliver the same academic success as their counterparts in the leafy suburbs. The disadvantages were regarded as too great, with many of their pupils coming from homes without books, without fathers, or without parents who speak English as their mother tongue.

But the left has often done the disadvantaged few favours by its attitudes. Low expectations of children generate low self-esteem and probably low qualifica-tions. Meanwhile real inadequacies in schools can be missed when little is expected of their pupils. The misguided acceptance of low standards has helped to sustain an education system in which large numbers of teenagers leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills. Yesterday, Tony Blair and David Blun-

kett broke with the past. They announced, in effect, that poor standards would not be tolerated. They want to set targets and monitoring mechanisms for every pupil, parent, teacher, headteacher, school and local authority. It is a good start. But can they deliver the improvements?

Two main areas of Labour's policy suggest that they could make a considerable difference. The first is increasing parental participation in their children's education. Drawing families into schools is essential, for if mum and dad don't think qualifications count, the children are unlikely to work hard in the classroom. In addition,

Labour proposes setting minimum levels of homework, and parents would be expected to make sure their kids sat down

to do it rather than watching television.
The second big plank of Labour's policy is improving the quality of teaching and leadership in schools. Teachers and headteachers who are not up to the job should be sacked, as Labour suggests.
We need this stick, but what about the

carrots? Good teachers also need to be recruited, encouraged and inspired. Mr Blunkett clearly recognises this. He pro-poses both a General Teaching Council and a new teaching position - an "Advanced Skills Teacher" - for long-serving, successful teachers who do not want to be promoted into administration.

Unsurprisingly, however, Labour does not tackle the real problem of pay. If we are really to attract bright graduates into teaching, salary scales for successful teachers will have to rise.

In the end, it is hard to propose convincing policies for improving schools where large numbers of pupils have language or behavioural problems without confronting the issue of resources. New and dynamic headteachers need to be able to appoint the best teachers on salaries that reward them for the difficult task they are taking on. More should be invested in special needs, and remedial help for literacy and numeracy weaknesses. In a political environment unfriendly to tax increases,

that means finding savings elsewhere.
All the more reason why Labour should spell out its spending priorities before a general election. Until they do so, it is impossible to know how much difference they are really prepared to make to Britain's schools.



Ministers tell us that beef products are a matter of weeks. But the same government has also refused to order a total ban Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, "no conceivable risk" to the public; he would let his own children eat hamburgers. Dr Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, would be happy to join them.

Yet the prospect of bumping into either of them in McDonald's is not wholly reassuring. Despite their advice, more and more people are giving up eating beef products for fear that they might become infected with a human form of BSE, better known as mad cow disease. Some are abstaining quietly and privately. Others are more public, with some parents insisting that beef should be taken off the school dinner menu. A number of eminent scientists have announced that they have given up pies and burgers which might contain offal. We may be on the brink of a panic that could severely dam-

age the beef industry.

The problem is that we do not know whom to believe: the scaremongers, the worried scientists or statements from Whitehall. In the past, we would have accepted the word of a health secretary. But respect for politicians has sunk so low that their every utterance is regarded with

Governments, after all, have an unreliable record when it comes to protecting public health. Recently, on the positive side, this particular administration was quick to go public on the dangers posed by certain types of contraceptive pill. Thousands of women switched brands in

ment has also refused to order a total ban on the advertising of cigarettes, the only product which, if used according to the

makers' specifications, is likely to kill.
Such a ban might damage tax revenue
from cigarettes. Likewise, anything less
than trenchant backing for the beef industry could lead to a sudden collapse of confidence in its products. No government wants to be held responsible for killing off a major British industry.

In short, there are plenty of reasons for doubting ministers when they express their love of hamburgers. That is why we need an independent assessment of the dangers posed to humans by BSE in cattle.

There is already an advisory group, comprising respectable scientists, which briefs the Government and the public on the threat. It has been more equivocal than Mr Dorrell about the risks, warning that it may be several years until complete reassurance can be given. But however earnest and conscientious this advisory body is, it can never command the trust of the public. It is simply too close to the Government.

A Royal Commission, with statutory powers, independent of the Ministry of Agriculture, should be established to give us a trustworthy picture of beef's safety. Its brief could be widened to cover other foods. Such a commission might not be able to provide all the answers. But at least everyone could make as informed a choice as possible before deciding their future eating habits.

ANOTHER VIEW Tim Sweeney

## Take note: banks do care

In Biblical times, money-lenders were the first to be thrown out of the temple. By the age of Shakespeare things had not got that much better, and the money-lender was still seen as a "pound of flesh" merchant. Reading the tabloid press of today, you would not think that much had changed. Banks and bankers are too

often a public enemy. Populist pressure groups are quick to rise to the cry that banks are uncaring, unsympathetic and generally deserve eternal damnation for their sins. Unfortunately, they tend to forget the context. With 54 million personal accounts, and millions of transactions every day, some mistakes will happen - but fortunately they represent a tiny percentage of the total. Of course banks make mistakes, and of course there are improvements to be made to services. No one denies this. However, it is wrong to think that banks make

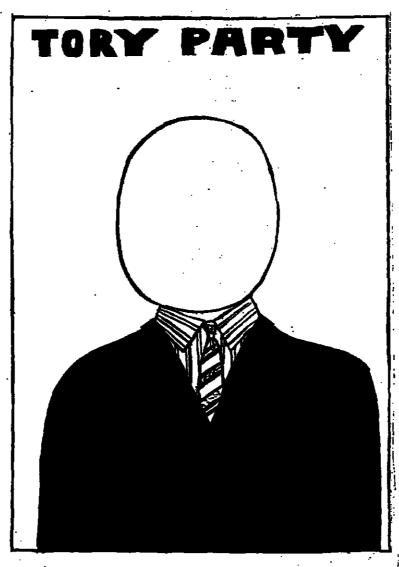
a lot of mistakes routinely or wilfully. The tone of this week's National Consumer Council report is that banks do not care about customer service, particularly when the customer is poor or has fallen on hard times. This is simply not true. Customer care is a primary concern of the banks and forms the basis of the fierce competition within the industry, even for the small percentage of those who fall into financial difficulties. All banks' corporate strategies place service and good client relationships at the top of their agenda. Competition within the industry means that millions are spent to improve service. Bankers' Association.

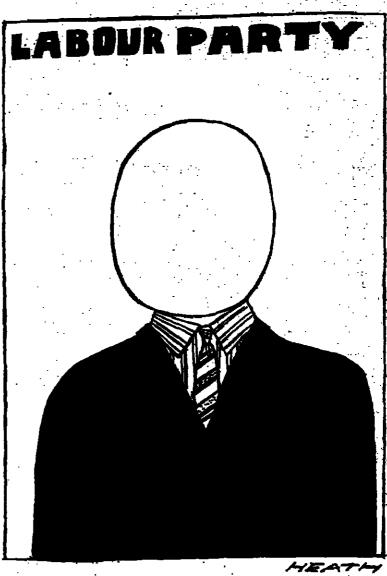
The NCC's report, which criticises elements of the banks' service to customers, contains comments and ideas that deserve careful study. Any suggestions that may help banks to improve further the service they provide will be looked at very seriously. It is in their competitive interest to do so. However, the figures simply do not justify the broad-brush criticism levelled. The NCC report was based on discussion groups consisting of no more than 70 people, some of whom did not even have a bank account. This is a very small sample compared with the individual banks' regular surveys of more

than 400,000 customers. Figures produced by the independent Banking Ombudsman tell a different story: in the annual report for 1994-5, the number of preliminary complaints recorded dropped by 16 per cent, while the number of genuine complaints accepted for full stigation fell by 14 per cent. This suggests that things are getting better, not worse. Looked at over a two-year period, the evidence for both categories shows

complaints down by as much as a third. Banking is one of Britain's most suc-cessful industries. Service improvements are more likely if we stop using emotive, anecdotal evidence to fuel prejudice against banks. Instead, we should look at the figures objectively and concentrate on constructive suggestions.

The writer is director-general of the British





Spot the difference

## - LETTERS TO THE EDITOR -

From Mr Geoffrey Thompson Sir: I purchased a copy of Something io Celebrate in July and now I read that the Archbishop of Canterbury is "not the type to stand by while his church sanctions living in sin" ("Keeping the faith -and no messing", 2 December). The report of the Church of

England's Board of Social Responsibility resulted from wide, practical and scholarly consultation, and carries the sub-title "Valuing families in Church and Society". A highly respectable document, its constructive deliberations contrast markedly with the pronouncement by Dr. George Carey on cohabitation. The report is sensitive to today's situations, offering balanced comment and a positive under-standing of cohabitation.

result not only of social trends but of economic practicalities. Some young couples have postponed marriage because of acute unemdilemma is apparent, love draws a couple together without the down irretrievably, and there are need for a formal marriage pronouncement, in spite of the

In practice, our cultural norm of traditional marriage should not be compared exclusively with the Christian love imperative. So, who is giving wise leadership in

stigma of "living in sin".

this matter - the church's Board of Social Responsibility, Dr Carey or evangelical dogma? Yours sincerely, GEOFFREY THOMPSON Walney Island, Cumbria

From Mrs Barbara Bingley Sir: In his condemnation of living in sin, the Archbishop of Canterbury demonstrated the firmer line on moral dilemmas that the Church of England is expected to take. This firmness makes it easier for us to discuss guidelines by which to live. However, I am saddened to find that there is never any mention of the genuine problems to which this outright condemnation can lead.

Some of us in our sixties who In this parish, as in most, live together for mutual support responsible cohabitation is a and comfort have reluctantly chosen to do so because of the inequitable state of English pension law regarding widows, and particularly divorced widows. I ployment problems. Where a realise no divorce is an ideal, but I The same behaviour is rightly when a marriage has broken no young children involved, it is painful that because of widespread ignorance of these legal madequacies, we should be condemned as perpetual sinners.

Yours sincerely, BARBARA BINGLEY Naviand, Suffolk

### Wind is blowing towards turbines

From Sir Simon Gourlay Sir: In his letter of 4 December, vice-chairman Robert Woodward of Country Guardian is at least consistent. He dislikes the look of wind turbines and the impact they have on the landscape. Fair enough; the question of what is beautiful and what is ngly is essentially a subjective matter and it is inevitable that there will

be varying opinions. However, there are many aspects of wind power generation that are not open to subjective assessment. In consistently ignoring the large technical progress of the last 10 years (to suggest that today's machines have the same power output relative to their size as they did 100 years ago is nonsense), which has helped reduce the price of wind-generated electricity from over 11p per kilowatt hour to under 5p in the most recent non-fossil fuel bid round, he underlines the paucity

Mr Woodward also stresses his view that wind turbines can never make a significant contribution to

our energy requirements. The new generation of turbines will enable around 12 per cent to be produced without the need for wind turbines "on every hill". And without the need for a "heavily subsidised price". Of the levy we all pay on our electricity bills, 95 per cent goes to the nuclear industry, only 5 per cent to renewables.

Perhaps in choosing to make a

(misleading) comparison between output from wind power and that from the coal-nowered Drax power station, Mr Woodward was administering the coup de grace to his own foot. A recen report has identified Drax as the dirtiest power station in Great Britain, responsible for considerable damage to several Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Ironically, the Department of the Environment spends significant sums to protect SSSIs. When it comes to truly clean power, wind and water are impossible to beat, a fact which happily is being recognised by an ever-increasing number of people. Yours sincerely, SIMON GOURLAY

Knighton, Powys

### Who'll vouch for it?

From Mr Alastair Campbell Sir: Despite being given an emphatic denial of your story "Blair set to accept Tory nursery youchers" (5 December), John Rentoul stated as a matter of fact both that Tony Blair had decided to accept the Government's mirsery vouchers scheme, and that David Blunkett was considering a plan to trump it by offering higher-value vouchers. To substantiate his story, Mr Rentoul quotes anonymous "sources" saving Mr Blair is "sympathetic" to

6

of knowing who these sources may be, but they are talking rot. The first Mr Blair knew of this notion was when I told him Mr Rentoul was writing about it. The first Mr Biunkett knew of the plan to "trump" the vouchers scheme was likewise when he heard of Mr Rentoul's latest effort. As the story has given rise to a number of calls from interested parties, I would be grateful if you could publish this letter. Yours sincerely,

ALASTAIR CAMPBELL Press Secretary to Tony Blair House of Commons the shift in policy. I have no way London, SW1

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.nk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret that we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

## Singular view of cohabitation | Shelling out presents to Nigerian chiefs

From Mr Emeka Achebe Sir: The clear implication of your correspondent David Orr in his an integrated approach. article "Shell wins over village

with cash and liquor" (1 December) that hard cash and a few bottles of liquor was all it takes to convince communities to accept an oil rig in their area is insulting to the people of the Niger Delta. The lawyers, doctors, university lecturers, senior civil servants and a range of other professionals who come from these communities - indeed, most Nigerians - might be as disturbed as I am over the comparison between the people of the delta today and "19th-century natives"

won over by gifts of colourful beads and fine cloths". If Mr Orr understands the traditions and customs of Nigeria, he knows that any citizen formally visiting a community other than his own would pay his or her respects by presenting a gift of some substance, usually liquor and kola nuts, or a token in lieu. expected of Shell, which spent about £1,000 hosting a gathering

of council chiefs and the people of the Greater Bonny Area, comprising several communities, including Sangama. The chiefs

Let's put the UK and environmental protection. It is 50 years since Clement back in Unesco From Mr Bruce Kent and others Sir. As members of the newly formed Forum for UN Renewa

immediate steps to rejoin Unesco. It is now 10 years since the UK left this important UN specialist agency. Whatever the reasons at the time for leaving, they are no longer valid. Under the leadership of Dr Federico Mayor,

we urge our government to take

Unesco has not only reformed itself, but also continues to play a vital role in the fields of education, science, art, culture The truth about

screeches your correspondent Anna Freeman (letter, 2

December).
How dreary! Once a year the notion of Father Christmas provides an opportunity to bring a little happiness, fun and kindness into the lives of children all over the world, even in some countries where the traditional 'myths" are very different from

### Shanghai'd Scots

From Sir Alastair Stewart Sir. Having a father and grandfa-ther who both spent their 21st birthdays in Shanghai, I read Niall Ferguson's article "The last oik of the British Empire" (4 December) with some interest. In both cases,

This goodwill exercise should not be confused with Shell's com-

jointly plan community develop-ment for the entire area to ensure

munity initiatives, which are based on providing lasting benefits to the communities. For example, communities of the Greater Bonny Area benefit from a youth training scheme, annual scholarships for secondary and university students, provision of schoolteachers, hospital equipment, a road, water scheme, and electricity, as well as agricultural assistance for farmers. Two new projects are a library, now being dy and the renovation of a community secondary school.

Yours faithfully, **EMEKA ACHEBE** General Manager Shell Petroleum Development Company Lagos, Nigeria

From Mr Gordon Glass Sir: May I reply to the three letters today (1 December) of selfjustification from Shell? My presentation on global corporate and political values to the London Business School Business

4 December

Attlee, Rab Butler and Julian Huxley played such important roles in the creation of Unesco. Today it is ridiculous that Britain should be on the outside, instead of playing a positive role from

Yours faithfully, BRUCE KENT, Chair, Forum for UN Renewal; LOUISE ZANRE, Pax Christi: JANET BLOOMPIELD, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; IAN LINDEN, Catholic Institute for International Relations; MICHAEL IRWIN, United Nations Association Forum for UN Renewal London, N7 4 December

## Santa will out

From Mr John Rawlins Sir: "Bah!", roared Scrooge, "Humbug!" "Lies, all lies"

our own.
"Pretending" provides one of the joys of childhood, all too soon to be overtaken by the necessity of having to face up to the realities of life. Was there ever a child that suffered injury from having believed in Father Christmas and

In any case if, as Anna Freeman asserts, God and heaven are

they were younger sons with few prospects at home, no fortune, but

### myths, how on earth can it be a sin to tell lies? Yours faithfully, JOHN RAWLINS

4 December From Mr John Douch Sir: Aged four, I was taken to see Father Christmas, seated in his

Holn, Devon

grotto at our local department store. Questioned as to my wants for Christmas, I replied "a fairy bike" (as children's bicycles were then termed). Some 66 years later, I remember his words to this day: "You shall have it, my son." The much-wanted present never materialised - how could it have, given my parents' financial situation? As far as I was concerned there existed no need for any further outside influence to destroy my belief in that particular myth. Yours faithfully, JOHN DOUCH Wellingborough Northamptonshire

### a good Scottish education. Seeking one's fortune used to be con-

sidered a laudable thing to do. Mr Ferguson, from his name, is presumably a Scot who has sought his fortune in England, moving to where the opportunities offer. Does he consider himself an oik? Yours etc, ALASTAIR STEWART Little Baddow, Essex

cussion on Shell's actions. Support appeared to be evenly split, with strong feelings in both What became crystal clear,

Ethics Forum on Tuesday used Anita Roddick's "Another View"

(28 November) to provoke dis-

though, is that the Body Shop's published credo is simply to "care for people, animals and the environment", while high on the list of Shell's published values are "responsibilities to sharehold-ers" and "profitability is essential": caring and human rights are dischided. Many companies are learning that the inclusion of the parsuit of money in their values leads, unsurprisingly, to conflict and allegations of greed. I wish our government would learn that

The route for personal and corporate development is to recognise that criticism provides an opportunity for learning and change rather than more self-

iustification. Yours faithfully, GORDON GLASS Director 2020 Vision Bath, Avon.

the Bible

### IONY BARBER 1 December The threat from

From Mr R. V. Wells Sir: The Rev Gilbert Markus (letter, 1 December) has completely missed the point of Luther's translations of the Bible. His was not a translation of St Jerome's Latin Vulgate, it was a new translation of the Greek and Hebrew

originals, of which the Vulgate

itself was a translation. Erasmus had produced a printed edition of the Greek Testament in 1516. Luther and Tyndale followed this in 1522 and 1526 respectively with translations of it into German and Engish. Martin Luther managed to complete his Bible by translating the Old Testament from the Greek and Hebrew, bypassing the Vulgate and going back to the original texts. Tyndale was not so lucky, he was burnt at the stake before he could complete his

Old Testament. It was these translations of the Bible from the original languages that outraged the Roman Catholic Church, making it feel threatened, not new translations of St Jerome's Latin version of

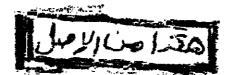
Yours faithfully. R. V. WELLS Widley, Hampshire

### Passing sentence

From Dr Stephen Butterworth Sir: Stephen Ward's report on the Major proposals for Ireland ("Major takes rhubarb rap for Ulster gobbledegook", 4 December) describes them as gobbledegook because the average sentence length is 35 words. He tells us that for moderately complex subjects, the average sentence length should be less than 20 words. A swift calculation shows that his own score, disregarding quotes, is 28 words. Is this, therefore, minor gobblede-gook, as distinct from Major? Yours sincerely, at 15 words a

Sept.

sentence, STEPHEN T. G. BUTTERWORTH Staplehurst, Kent



# Patients' champion the NHS should fear

John Spiers is the man the medical establishment loves to hate. He is about to get his revenge

The Department of Health must be on his desk, dressed in a bright white ruing the day they selected a "safe" right-wing fory multi-million-aire to chair the Brighton Healthcare NHS Trust. If they thought they had got themselves just another political ves man like a many others yes man, like so many others appointed at the start of the health reforms, they know now they were wrong. But if it is bad news for the NHS bureaucracy, it is likely to be very good news indeed for patients.

John Spiers has just been appointed chairman of the Patients Association. What's that? Barely beard of it? You will. This quiet, respectable charity founded in 1963, part-financed by the Department of Health, has hardly been a player in the past few years of radical NHS change. Preferring to operate through node and whispers in the corridors of rooms, enjoying an inti-

the corridors of power, enjoying an infi-mate if unhealthy relationship with the mighty Royal Colleges of the medical profession, its voice has been muted. No longer. Nothing John Spiers does is muted. He is the megaphone without the diplomacy. He makes Mike Tyson seem uncombative. "The NHS belongs to natients not to the NHS belongs to patients, not to the medical establishment" is his motto.
Oh, how the Department of Health

The story so far. Spiers, aged 53, made his fortune in publishing. A right-wing Tory in Brighton, a JP, on countless boards and charities, he was appointed to the Brighton Healthcare chairmanship in 1991. To the dispute of the destern gust of the doctors, he was famous for hymning the praises of Virginia Bottomley in honeyed, cooing tones. When I first met him, he was sitting in his office at the hospital, his feet up to be ousted by doctors.

suit, surrounded by dazzling modern paintings (he is a collector), with a photo of Bottomley taking pride of place on his wall

From the start, he called himself "the voice of Joe Public". He outraged hospital staff by getting into a wheel-chair incognito, in his own accident and emergency department, pretend-ing to have lost all feeling in his legs. He was told to wait five hours; a porter swore at him; a nurse told him he'd have to wait 20 minutes to be taken to a disabled toilet on another floor. This he said, was the "invisible hospital"

that NHS managers never saw. He regards the Patients' Charter as nothing of the kind and intends to campaign for the real thing - what he calls a Patient's Patients' Charter. Instead of measuring the hotel services and the waiting times in the NHS, it will test the things meable most most will test the things people most want and need to know how good is the treatment? How good is the doctor? What are the outcomes for this procedure under this consultant?

In Brighton, Spiers set up a clinical performance unit to measure the quality of his own doctors, designed to link the results eventually to doctors' pay. No other manager anywhere had gone as far as this, and the doctors rebelled. The British Medical Association declared war. The standing consultants' committee passed a near-unanimous vote of no confidence in him.

Expecting support, he found his friends in the Health Department, even his Blessed Virginia, looking the other way in embarrassment. So he resigned, the first NHS trust chairman



In its treachery the Department of Health may have unloosed an unguided missile

The department's formal statement noted only that he was "lively" and this was an internal affair for the trust. In their treachery, they may have unloosed an unguided missile.

The glee I detected in Spiers's eye as he bounded out of his first Patients Association council meeting to meet me betokens his determination to set about the medical establishment with renewed vim. The timid old Patients Association may have little idea what a hand grenade they have unpinned. His ideas

aren't radical, they are revolutionary.

First, he wants league tables of all doctors' results collected and pubbshed. The BMA throws its hands up in horror. How can you compare a doctor doing routine work with a doctor who takes on risky cases? Jim Johnson, head of the BMA Consultants Committee, says: "I could cut my death rate by 10 per cent, no problem.

only be given to managers, never to patients." Another doctors' spokesman concurs: "We wouldn't want to frighten the patients."

These are the attitudes that Spiers intends to demolish. Publish and be damned, he says, since only by pub-lishing will the tables be refined to take subtleties into account. The Government was tempted but has backed off providing these tables in England and Wales, unwilling to stir up doctors before an election.

Such figures as there are (all pre-

serve doctors' anonymity) show that the specialist teams of doctors which treat the most cases do best, while the "dabblers" in general surgery are the most dangerous. The BMA retorts that general surgeons are the back-bone of the NHS, staffing the district general hospitals where it would be impossible to have surgeons in every specialism. But Spiers is always one jump ahead: "Just so. That is why district general hospitals have to go. People will have to travel further to very large regional centres, for cancer or anything serious, where there is round-the-clock coverage by consul-tants on duty in every field. You need properly staffed specialist ambulances to transport people farther to get bet-

All the recent major reports into various aspects of the NHS back him up. Specialism is best and worth travelling for. The trouble is, patients don't want it. They cling to every killer cottage hospital or dearly loved local crumbling Victorian pile, where too many exhausted junior doctors carry sumer within the NHS.

I'd just refuse the iffy ones." He adds: out complex emergency operations "If you collect the figures, they should unsupervised. Small and local may be popular, but except for minor treatments it is neither safe nor economic. Yet how are patients to know that, unless the figures are published? Spiers sees it as his jub to educate patients better to demand the things that really matter. To do that, he needs the figures.

He also wants public assessments of GPs, and is demanding that GPs open their clinics at times people can use them, between 6pm and 9pm, and at weekends. He wants to remove GPs right to dump troublesome or unprofitable patients.

The Patients Association has a large corporate membership of NHS trusts, and a very small individual patient membership of well below a thousand. The trouble with patient power is that it has no democratic basis and so is not a legitimate estate within the NHS. Spiers intends to conduct six major opinion polls a year to sound out patient opinion far and wide. He needs to prove that he has popular patient support if he is going to carry real authority.

John Spiers is an extremist. Almost all his criticisms of the way the NHS is run are absolutely right but lacking finesse. As a manager, he tried to do too much too soon and offended too many potential allies among the good doctors. But as a professional profester and patients' advocate, he has found his metier. If he can establish the reputation of the Patients Association as a bona fide popular group, he may at last provide the missing genuine voice of the con-

The German fear of substituting a

weak Euro-currency for the mark is so

intense that Mr Kohl's centre-right

government and the Social Democra-

tic opposition have recently been out-bidding each other in an effort to secure even tougher conditions for

monetary union than are stipulated in

Maastricht. Theo Waigel, Germany's

Finance Minister, has proposed a sys-

tem of fines on countries that practise lax budgetary discipline after joining

the single currency.

The Maastricht treaty is, indeed,

responsible economic policies after the

start of monetary union are somewhat

vague. But Mr Waigel's main point is

Neither Chirac nor

Kohl will abandon the

single currency

without a titanic fight

## Have I got news for you, or not?

comment

We all like to think that we follow the news pretty closely, but do we really? How inventing a series of abbreviaaware are we of the latest developments in world events? For instance, how well would we do when faced with a simple test on this week's news?

Well, let's find out! Here is a simple test. I'm going to print several "news stories" taken from the last few days, and all you have to do is say which ones are true, and which ones are made up. It's as easy as that. Here we go now!

1. Stephen Dorrell's blitz on bureaucracy in the NHS, which is hoped to get rid of 30,000 jobs, will create a new team of more than 40,000 "bureaucrat-busters" whose job it will be to eliminate waste. and overmanning.

2. Professor Sir Michael

Howard, the eminent war historian, is suing the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, on the grounds that the use of their name by the latter is cheapening the reputation of the former. He wants Michael Howard either to change his name or

One of the most scathing reviews of the new Beatles single "Free as a Bird "was writ-ten by, of all people. John Lennon, Among his papers was found a dismissal of the song by the composer as "a tawdry hil note to the effect that "if Paul and George get their hands on this, I only hope the song will self-destruct out of a perverse sense of self-preservation", 4. Dave Lee Travis, the erst-

while Radio 1 disc jockey, is suing the inventors of the bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich. This unlikely court action has come about because Dave Lee Travis's career has slowed up recently and he blames this on the similarity between his familiar initials, DLT and the familiar abbreviation for the sandwich, BLT. He does not claim that anyone confuses one with the other but that his initials (which came first) have been overshadowed by the universal sandwich name. He is secking £3m in damages, or sandwiches for life. Legal experts are following the case keenly, as it is the first time a

snack has been sued by a jock. 5. A poll taken among the US peace-keeping force being sent out by President Clinton reveals flawed in that the rules for ensuring | that 10 per cent of them think they are going to Bosnia, 25 per cent to Northern Ireland and 65 per cent to the rougher parts of Washington DC.

6. The current wave of strike action in France is, it turns out. in protest against the Tahitian government's bomb-testing programme, which involves a random series of explosions in the middle of Paris.

7. The British government has devised a new campaign to

tions which all bear the initials BSE so that very soon the initials BSE will lose their association with killer hamburgers. Among these new meanings of BSE are the new British Standards Executive, British Subways (Eastern), the Birmingham School of Ethics, the Bank of Scotland and Edinburgh, and the Bloody Scott Enquiry. as the Scott enquiry is known familiarly in cabinet circles. The Government is also thinking of asking the film censor to introduce a new film category of "BSE" ("Brutality, Sex and Ennui" ).

8. Which sporting feat this week was described as "perhaps the greatest act of endurance in modern games"? Was it: a) Atherton's innings which denied South Africa victory in the second Test? b) the periormance of any TV viewer who persevered to the end of the lat-



MILES KINGTON

est snooker tournament; e) an official government judgement on anyone who gets involved with a business scheme with Terry Venables?

9. A memo was recently circulated at the Home Office, warning all personnel not to trust any memos circulated in the next fortnight, as these were all going to be false memos designed to be leaked to the Labour Party to spread disinformation there. Unfortunately, the initial memo was leaked to the Labour Party.

10. The Queen Mother's hip replacement operation was not due for several months yet, but she was ordered to have it early in order to steal the royal limelight back from Princess Diana. The idea was that as the Queen Mum is the only royal who commands anything like the same support as Diana, she should be used as swiftly as possible to repair the damage done by "Dianarama", hence her visit to hospital and very public re-emergence. What is not so well-known is that the surgeons thought she was not ready for the hip replacement and the Oueen Mother did not actually have the operation this time - she merely went through the motions - which is why she appeared to be walking so well afterwards. Her hip will be done in private next month. Answers: they are all true.

but all officially denied.

## France's strikers embody a wider hostility that Europe's leaders failed to foresee at Maastricht

## The battle for Europe's future

When France sneezes, Europe catches a cold. It was true in 1789, 1848 and 1968, and now it may be true for the last years of this century. As each day passes, the social convulsions gripping France acquire the potential to shatter every assumption made by Europe's leaders about

our political and economic future. The plan as devised in Maastrich in December 1991, was that Germany, France and as many other European Union countries as possible would launch a single currency by January 1999 at the latest. The EU would simultaneously take a substantial step towards political union. These measures, the most ambitious since the six



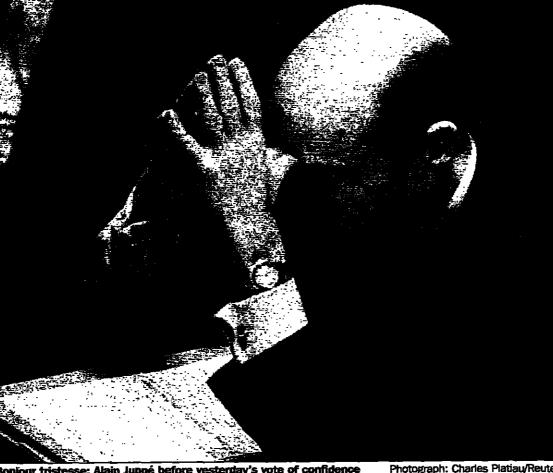
members of the original European Economic Community signed the Treaty of Rome in 1957, were intended to set the seal on the single market and dispel for ever the possibility that Europe might lapse into its historical pattern of malignant national rivalries. What the creators of Maastricht failed to foresee was the degree to which their proposals would inspire public scepticism or even hostility. The British example is well known, and Denmark's initial rejection of the treaty in a 1992 referendum provided a taste of things to come, but the real shock has been the trini that events have taken in

France and Germany, the EU's pivotal

France's striking public sector workers and protesting students are not motivated directly by a desire to ditch Maastricht, but if they force President Jacques Chirac and his conservative government into concessions they will almost certainly cause a delay, possi-bly fatal, to monetary union. The strikers are determined to block the government's efforts to restructure the: welfare system and bring the state nomic growth this year and in 1996 budget deficit down to 3 per cent of that few independent economists think gross domestic product by 1997; thus is within reach. Growth is bound to be enabling France to qualify for mone-

enabling France to qualify for mone: hit by the combined impact of the austry union under Maastricht's terms. Terity programme and the strikes.

One cannot yet rule out the possi
Should the government make major One cannot yet rule out the possi-bility that Mr Chirac and his Prime bility that Mr Chirac and his Prime concessions on public spending, the Minister, Alain Juppé, will successfully markets will punish the franc in the end the strikes, implement the austerity programme and proceed with the Maastricht targets. With France



Bonjour tristesse: Alain Juppé before yesterday's vote of confidence

single currency on schedule. Certainly, when Mr Chirac meets Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the German spa town of Baden-Baden tomorrow, it will be extraordinary if either leader hints there is a problem with the Maastricht scenario. Immense political will lies behind the single currency project, and neither Mr Chirac nor Mr Kohl will abandon it without a titanic fight.

Yet the odds appear to be increasingly stacked against the French government. Its deficit-cutting strategy depends on achieving a degree of eco-nomic growth this year and in 1996

belief that France will fail to meet the

knocked out as a contender for monetary union, the EU would drop 1999 as the launch date, since everyone accepts that the project makes no sense without French participation.

However, the EU would probably try to set a later date for monetary union rather than abandon it altogether. Whether the markets would find that credible is another matter.

With a mighty effort, France could meet the Maastricht conditions. If it does, however, the cost will be high in terms of unemployment, job insecurity, higher taxes, reduced welfare benefits and a society divided from its government. By committing himself to cutting the budget deficit in conformity with Maastricht's timetable, Mr Chirac has already been forced to drop the most prominent of his many election promises last spring, the pledge to wage war on unemployment.

At 11.5 per cent of the workforce,

Photograph: Charles Platiau/Reuter

or almost 3 million people, unemployment is seen by many French as their country's most serious social ill. Advocates of the single currency say it will cure unemployment by provid-ing exceptionally stable conditions for economic growth, including low interest rates and low inflation. But even if this happy forecast is accurate, it cannot come true until some time after 1999, and it is unclear that French public opinion will wait patiently for the promised land while being subjected

to rigorous austerity measures. In Germany, too, public opinion is a problem. Surveys repeatedly indicate that Germans will refuse to give up the Deutschmark, their most precious symbol of post-war success, unless the single currency is as rock-solid in value. The ecu, the EU's notional currency since 1981, has been anything but rock-solid, declining steadily against the mark over the years.

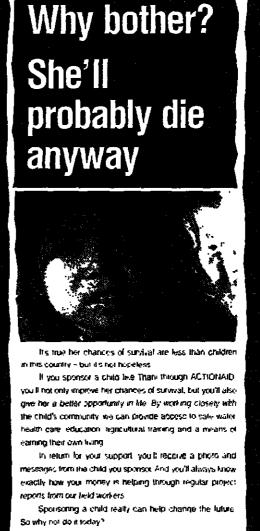
that Germany will not go ahead with the single currency unless all other participants are up to scratch - in fact, more than up to scratch - on low bud-get deficits, low public debts, a stable exchange rate and all the other Maastricht criteria. This has two far-reaching implications.

First, it means there is practically no chance that Italy and Spain could form part of monetary union in 1999. Bitter recriminations, even a blocking policy, can be expected from the gov ernments in Rome and Madrid, fear-ful of being locked into an EU second division for southerners. There is also a question mark over Belgium's ability to meet the Maastricht conditions. but no one has yet dared address the difficulty of having a single currency that excludes the country which hosts the European Commission and whose

capital is synonymous with the EU.

The second implication is that France itself will be pushed into ever more deflationary policies in an effort to fulfil Germany's strict new demands. In such circumstances social tensions can only grow, and the pressure on Mr Chirac to reverse course will intensify accordingly.

However, we are not quite there yet. Those who are betting against monetary union starting as planned in 1999 could still lose their money. It will be a battle fought to the last, with nothing less than the destiny of Europe at



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### IN BRIEF

### Maxwell jury 'home by Christmas'

The long-serving Maxwell fraud trial jury was offered some festive cheer on day 115 yesterday when its members were told whatever happens in the epic case they will be home for Christmas, writes John Willcock. Expected to retire to consider their verdicts at the end of next week, the seven women and five men have been warned they will stay overnight at a secret hotel while deliberating the fate of three defendants. But in the seventh month of the trial judge Lord Justice Phillips is worried there will not be enough time for the Old Bailey panel to reach conclusions by Friday December 22, the last working day before the holiday. "I hope you will be able to return verdicts by 22. December." he told the jury. "While considering your verdicts you will spend nights at a hotel."

### Retail sales on the up and up

A new indicator of retail sales launched by the British Retail Consortium showed that the value of retail sales grew in November at an annual rate of 3.2 per cent. In the last three months, average sales growth had been 3 per cent. Andrew Sentance, chief economic adviser to the BRC, said that retail sales valucs were "not yet increasing sufficiently strongly to provide the basis for substantial volume growth."

### **Housing starts slide**

Housing starts in October were 13,300, almost a fifth down on last year, according to official statistics from the Department of Environment. In the three months to October, total starts and completions were 9 per cent down on the previous three

### Fewer companies going under

Receiverships and administration orders fell by 23 per cent in November to 163, according to figures from Touche Ross. The figure was also 12 per cent down on November last year. The most significant decreases occurred in the North West, Wales and London and the South East. Increases occurred in construction, wholesale distribution and agriculture.

### Bank intervention lifts franc

The franc recovered by 2 centimes against the mark, with reports in the market of heavy intervention by the Banque de France. The bourse also staged a comeback, with the CAC-40 index of leading shares reversing almost all of Monday's decline with a rise of 2.25 per cent.

### Gas price down 40% for business

The average price of gas for UK business customers fell by 40 per cent in the year to September, according to the latest report by National Utility Services, making Britain the cheapest for gas of the 13 countries surveyed. The NUS said that the gas industry faces continued "chaos" as prices tumble in the face of excess supply. The report highlights the plight of British Gas, which is locked into long term "take or pay" contracts with North Sea producers at high prices and is being forced to buy more gas than it can sell.

# BP sale makes Treasury £180m

PETER RODGERS **Business Editor** 

The Government yesterday made a profit of £180m on its last remaining shares in BP, which the Bank of England and the Treasury have kept since a disastrous privatisation sale during the 1987 stock market crash.

The £513m of shares were placed by SBC Warburg after the investment bank won a secret City auction for the business, organised by Rothschild, the Gov-ernment's advisers, late on Monday evening. They represent 1.8 per cent of BP's shares. Andrew Smith, Labour's Shadow Chief Secretary, invoked Lord Stockton's famous

gibe from the mid-1980s to de-clare: "The Tories are intent on

selling off the family silver to pay

sioned earlier this year to sell a share portfolio of 34 government "bin-ends" worth more than £1.2bn in total, of which BP is the first and largest to go. Other significant holdings to

the airports operator BAA and National Power. The BP sale was claimed to be the largest bought deal of its kind in the City and used a rarely employed procedure. Warburg bid 508p for the 101

million shares against three or four other securities houses,

who were invited into Roth-

be put on the block later include

schild at 8pm, after the markets The firms were not told which of the stocks they were bidding for until after they arrived, and each team was closeted in a separate room, told how many BP

Value (£m) at 14 Nov 1995 142.9 54.5 15.4 North West Water 23.0 Severn Trent 19.2 National Power 94:0 25.9 Scottish Hydro-Electric Scottish Power

to bid a price. The only indication they had been given in advance was that they would be called upon to commit a large

amount of capital. Rothschild kept the bidders apart all evening and Warburg said it still did not know who the

others were, though City spec-ulation was that BZW, Merrill Lynch and at least one other American house were involved. Starting when the markets opened yesterday, SBC Warburg placed the holding with about 100 institutions, half UK

was 513p, a profit margin of 5p a share - or £5m - and BP stock closed at 517p, though this was down 14p on the opening.

SBC Warburg was basking in glory afterwards, because the scale of the deal appeared to vindicate the motives behind the merger that brought Swiss Bank Corporation and the English merchant bank together earlier this year.

One SBC Warburg source suggested the two could never nave won the auction separate ly, because it required SBC's capital and skill in agency trad-ing and Warburg's relationships, distribution and research.

The bulk of the Government's BP holding was acquired in 1987 as part of the dramatic manoeuvres surrounding the. £7.25bn sale of its 31.5 per

and Continental and half in the cent remaining stake in the US, by 3pm. The placing price company, for which Rothschild, was the government adviser. The October crash occurred

after the underwriting but before the sale went through, leaving the City facing large losses as the BP price plunged. But Lord Lawson, then Chancellor, insisted on pushing ahead against opposition from the City.

which invoked a force majeure

clause to void the underwriting However, he agreed to a "safety net" to prevent further falls in the Bank of England picked up 39 million part-paid BP shares. for £27m. Fully paid, the shares would have cost 330p. The Treasurvaiso held on to a further 68 million shares issued to it at the time by BP at the same price. The holdings the Government re-tained were worth about £330m

## Ofwat plunges Welsh offer into confusion

Industrial Correspondent

Ofwat, the water industry watchdog, plunged Welsh Water's agreed £872m bid for South Wales Electricity into confusion last night by warning that the group may be forced to list its core water operations separately on the Stock Exchange.

Ian Byatt, director-general of Ofwat, yesterday said the merger would reduce his information on the regulated water business and that the issue could be resolved through a separate A spokeswoman for Mr Byatt

said a separate listing was likely to be a feature in all future mergers involving the 10 big water and sewage companies. The issue was not raised ear-

lier this year when North West Water acquired Norweb, the electricity firm operating in the same area. But Lyonnaise des Eaux of France recently agreed to list all its UK water interests by 2005 as part of the Government's clearance of its takeover of Northumbrian Water.

In a consultation document ssued yesterday, Mr Byatt said: "I would welcome comments, in particular on the effect the agerial effectiveness. We have that Swalec's stock market quotation would disappear and the characteristic of that of Welsh Water's quotation would be radically changed. This would lead to a loss of information about the way investors view the

Ofwat said the bid raised sim-

ilar concerns to those relating to the bid by North West Water for Norweb, but added: The world moves on and we would like to see this [separate listing] in all future takeovers in the industry." A spokesman for Welsh Water said the watchdog was consulting on the possibility rather than saying it will happen. "We will respond in due course," he said.

A spokeswoman for the electricity regulator, Offer, said it was not asking for a separate listing for the core electricity operations in South Wales. But Professor Stephen Littlechild, director-general of Offer. is also concerned about loss of information and is likely to seek amendments to the operating licences to resolve the issue.

The consultation, being conducted jointly by Mr Byatt and Professor Littlechild, will result in a recommendation to the Office of Fair Trading, which in turn advises the Government on whether the bid should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Comission.

The document warned that the regulators at present have wide-ranging powers to acquire information from regulated anies about their re merger could have on man- ed activities and that they need to secure continued access to also drawn attention to the fact sufficient high-quality information to allow them to carry out their duties. Professor Littlechild has al-

ready produced licence modifications to achieve improved access to information. These will be formally published after further discussion with the companies concerned.



John Watts, Minister of State at the Department of Transport (left) with Sir Ernest Harrison, the chairman of Racal, yesterday. Racal confirmed it is to buy British Railways in-house telecommunications supplier, BRT, for £132.75m.

## Littlewoods bidder goes direct

The Barry Dale consortium that has made a £1.2bn offer for the Littlewoods group has writ-ten to the shareholders in a final attempt to argue its case ahead of tomorrow's crucial

emergency general meeting. Mr Dale's advisers, Dawnay Day, have told shareholders that its bid is for the whole

group and not a break-up bid. said: "I know we have some It also states that allowing the support from the family but we consortium access to the company's accounts does not commit shareholders to accepting the offer or any other proposal. It says it is happy for mem-bers of the Moores family, who control the company, to remain involved in its future.

Dale tomorrow, the consor-tium will stay together and hope for another chance. Mr Dale, who is a former chief executive of Littlewoods,

Mr Dale's proposals must now compete against a rival £1.1bn offer made for the company this week by a group-led

just don't know which way the

vote will go." It is thought that

even if the vote goes against Mr

by Sir David Alliance, chairman of Coats Viyella and the N Brown mail order company. Both bids will be discussed at tomorrow's meeting. Peter Moores will propose two more resolutions. One will urge shareholders to consider all bids. The second proposes preparing a sales memorandum giving financial disclosure to potential buyers.

## BTR tempers optimism | Bank warns on forged certificates on outlook for profits

Deputy City Editor

BTR warned the City yesterday that its profits expectations for the year to December were too high, blaming a downturn in industrial activity around the world. The industrial conglomcrate's shares slipped 14p to 320p as analysts took red pens

to their forecasts.

The market's relatively benign reaction compared with its harsh treatment of the company a year ago when BTR's shares

tumbled 12 per cent in a day fol- 10 largest companies, wrapped lowing a similar statement warning of difficulties passing on rising raw material prices.

"As is now becoming evident in many countries, industrial activity in 1995 has shown little signs of sustained recovery following the strong first quarter," the company said. Particular areas of weakness included Anstralian construction and both North American and European automotive activities.

Yesterday's trading news came as BTR, one of Britain's forecast by £100m to £1.44bn.

up the acquisition of its Australian subsidiary BTR Nylex and ahead of the transfer of power from Alan Jackson to his

Ian Strachan The trading statement left most analysts relatively unworried. Geoff Allum at Henderson Crosthwaite said he expected a conservative trading statement before the end of BTR's financial year in De-cember, but he cut his full-year

successor as chief executive,

### JOHN WILLCOCK if he or she is being offered were arrested and charged with

Financial Correspondent

The head of the Bank of England's special investigations unit warned the City yesterday of the "markedly increasing" number of forged certificates of deposit circulating in global financial markets.

The warning was prompted by a spate of inquiries from the public and institutions in the UK and abroad over certificates of deposit for more than \$1bn, supposedly drawn on the Bank of England. In fact the Bank issues no such certificates.

Ian Watt, head of the Bank's investigations unit, said: "An investor might come across them

paper when they're trying to a similar type of fraud, adborrow or perhaps to make an investment, and one of these certificates might be produced to them, suggesting that an un-named individual has a very large sum of money deposited with the Bank of England."

Mr Watt said that so far the Bank was not aware of anyone falling for this type of fraud, but warned: "There are intermediaries who are putting out this forged paper and the worry is that someone might eventually be taken in by it, which is the reason why we are very auxious to get the news around and protect the public generally."

vanced fee fraud, after an investigation called Operation Labis. A number of people operating a bank in Torquay were offering multi-million-pound loans in exchange for a cash fee up-front. The loans never materialised.

Mr Watt said the present spate of forgeries was connected with this type of fraud. "We are in touch, of course, with the police and they from time to time refer documents to us to determine whether they are genuine or not."

The forged Bank of England certificates have surfaced abroad just as often as in the UK.

rench till minis

## Kussian bonds are back

JOHN EISENHAMMER Financial Editor

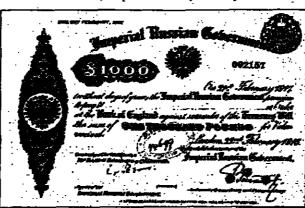
Suitably icy winds and flurries of snow carried the historic message to the City yesterday that the Russians are back. After an 80-year enforced absence, the City of St Petersburg announced a return to the international bond markets.

Buoyed by the success of its domestic fund-raising, Russia's second city felt it time to brave the stigma of Soviet default and tempt London's investment community with the prospect of sensational rewards - and a little risk.

Dispensing with the heavy American investment bank artillery traditional for these occasions, the honours were done, at great Russian length, by Anatoly Sobchak, the Mayor of St Petersburg. The domestic political situation may be con-

fusing, he said, as prime minis-ters come and go and 42 polit-ical parties jostle for position, but St Petersburg, is a beacon of stability and prosperity.

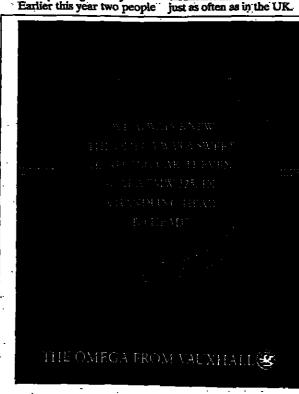
ably from January, internation dards is long-term. Earnings al investors will be encouraged to participate in the regular tions will be able to get their municipal bond auctions. The attraction is that the City is now able to issue 18- to 24-month There is to be no special international bond issue, but prob-

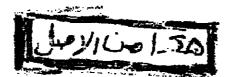


money out, Mr Sobchak said. But even Russian investors de manded more than the Mayor's smooth assurances. Earlier this

year the yield on the nine-month zero coupon bonds was up to 250 per cent. International investors, with memories alive of all those useless, defaulted Russian bonds decorating the walls of just about every investment bank in the City, will no doubt be looking for similar returns. Even on 3month zero coupon bonds, the yield has only come down to 80

At those sort of rates, St Petersburg is not expected to try to raise very much, but rather to open the first chink in the door of international accept-ability for the return of Russian





The company may have failed to get its message across to its

customers and industry regulators, but in the City its explanation for the

water shortages - an act of God and geography - is widely

accepted'

## How Yorkshire Water just keeps rolling along Anyone who watched the Panorama programme on Yorkshire Water the other ket is concerned, therefore, the company's and trade and industry committees, pubhacked the creation of national monopolies | Petersburg is an island of stability and prosmight would be less are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Minwhere necessary, presumably because they problems are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Minhacked the creation of national monopolies | Petersburg is an island of stability and prosmight would be less are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Minhacked the creation of national monopolies | Petersburg is an island of stability and prosmight would be less are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Minhacked the creation of national monopolies | Petersburg is an island of stability and prosmight would be less are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Minhacked the creation of national monopolies | Petersburg is an island of stability and prosmight would be less are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Minhacked the creation of national monopolies | Petersburg is an island of stability and prosmight would be less are neither here nor there. So long | lished yesterday, shows that our own Min-

night would be left wondering why on earth heads haven't yet rolled at this beleaguered willty. The programme said nothing new about the region's water shortage problems, but as only television can, it summarised the case against Yorkshire and its scemingly inept management in terms as devastating as they come. In part, the answer to why top management is still in place is the remarkably sanguine view investors have of this extraordinary situation.

The City has never been good at taking an interest in anything that happens north of Watford, not unless it has pound signs written all over it anyway, but given what a widely held stock Yorkshire Water is, you might expect at least some concern. Not so if a straw poll of fund managers conducted yesterday is anything to go by. The company may have failed to get its message across to its customers and industry regulators, but in the City its explanation for the water shortages - an act of God and geography - is widely accepted.

Even the painful financial effects of the drought on the company - it is costing £3m a week to tanker in water from elsewhere while the extra investment needed to make sure this never happens again might ulti-mately cost hundreds of millions - seems to have passed largely unnoticed; over the past year Yorkshire Water shares have exactly tracked the sector. As far as the stock maras the profits and dividends keep rolling in, and the monopoly franchise is safe, who cares what customers think?

A public inquiry is being conducted into Yorkshire's water shortage problems and it is said MoD procurement policies were seen is possible this will reflect better on mana- it as "vereine on the hostile to the indigenous." magement than Panoruma's hatchet job. Failure to anticipate last summer's drought was understandable enough, after all. Even so, there is no doubt that a company that has lost the faith and goodwill of its customers, even when it has the privilege of monopoly, is in serious trouble. It is hard for incumbant management to climb back from the sort of public relations disaster Yorkshire has suffered. Customers need some outward sign that things have, and will, change. That usually means new people in the top jobs. It may be unfair, but it is also the way of the world. in the Dark Ages.

### New offensive needed on defence

Defence, like City financial services, is one of Britain's least glamorous but most successful industries. Exports at £5bn a year are second only to those of the US, but with the end of the cold war and the sharp decline in armaments spending here and abroad, the going is tougher than ever for

istry of Defence, rather than helping, is only exacerbating the problem. Witnesses complained bitterly about the MoD's attaudes. The Defence Manufacturers' Association as "verging on the hostile to the indigenous

industrial base. Though things seem to have improved a little over the past 18 months - attempts to forge partnerships with suppliers have helped - most thought there was a long way to go. To the extent that the MoD adopts a more sensitive approach to the needs of as big spending decisions. The valuable stream of smaller purchases that in total have a tremendous influence on the fortunes of manufacturing companies, are still back

Long-term national security depends equally on the creation of wealth as the strength of the armed forces, the MPs say. and who can argue with that. The most serious impact of this strategic vacuum is a damaging drop in research and development, which in this industry – as in pharmaceuti-cals – is fundamental to long-term health.

The MPs are surely right in arguing that the MoD should make maintenance of the defence industry's technology base a key pri-A joint inquiry by the Commons defence ter bet than deals with the US. The MPs

approved of GEC's recently acquired contrei of a large part of warship building.

Specialist government departments such as defence are more interested in their constituency, the armed forces, than in the companies they deal with, which are watched wer by the DTI. This seems to be the core of the problem. A solution would surely be for the MoD to measure its success at least in part by the health of the defence industry, so that it can be ticked off when it is seen fail. The MPs suggestion that it should share some of the responsibility for over-British industry, it only appears to go as far seeing the defence industry and its techlog, with the DTI is a sensible one.

### Fund-raising the St Petersburg way

St Petersburg is well on the way to be-coming one of Europe's most successful cities, gushed its mayor. Anatoly Sobchak. No effort will be spared in driving forward the regeneration of this once great outpost of chilisation, was the thrust of his message vesterday to potential City investors. He might just as well have said that no expense is too great, either. For by any Western standards. St Petersburg is having to pay astonority. They also also urge the Government ishing prices for the privilege of borrowing to look to European collaboration as a bet-money from its domestic Russian investors. Will the plug be pulled? Clearly not one for And, if Mr Sobchak is to be believed. St

heaven help the Moscow lot should they choose to follow him down the international bond market path.

business

The St Petersburg fund-raising programme has been mainly restricted to threemonth zero coupon bonds, which on occasion have managed to creep up to nine or even 12 months. long-term by Russian standards. The vield, earlier this year, was over 200 per cent. That means that an investor put up 33 roubles and nine months later collected 100 in return. At those sort of rates, you wonder how St Petersburg can afford to regenerate anything. To get the measure of the market distrust that Mr Sobehak and friends are having to pay for, a two-year US government bond, stripped of its coupun. will yield about 5 per cent. The current rate for long UK gilts is under 8 per cent.

Things would be easier for St Petershurg's financiers if they were borrowing into a riproaring inflationary boom, reducing the real value of their repayment burden. But nothing is that simple, for the rouble con-tinues to be loosely pegged to the dollar, hovering around the 4,700 mark. If the peg continues, then an international investor buying into the 18- to 24-month bonds, with which St Petersburg is hoping to entice some City attention, will make an astonishing

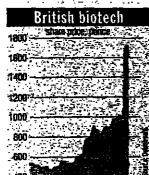
Cash gains: Research head at cancer drug group reveals Lloyd's losses - Former ad agency chiefs make £10m in multimedia launch

## Biotech man defends his £1.5m share option profit

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Peter Lewis, head of research and development at British Biotech, yesterday defended his decision to cash in share options just days after the group an-nounced a potential break-

through in cancer treatment. Since the news, the shares have soared from £10.43, with one deal going through at £25 it is a very good company and last week. Mr Lewis's sale at think the shares will so up fur-£17.50 a share netted thin a ther, but I felt I had to protect



£1.5m profit, with fellow board member James Noble making a further £1.7m from option sales yesterday. The shares closed last night down 110p at £16.08.

Speaking from the company's Oxford base yesterday, Dr Lewis said the options "represented 90 per cent of my financial position and I had to shelter some of my position, as it were. I still think it is a very good company and

good reason" for raising the cash now as a loss-making name at the Lloyd's of London insurance market. He faces a cash call next year from the new Equitas reinsurance vehicle designed to protect names from

companies like British Biotech were more usual in the US and



In the money: Maurice Saatchi (right) profited in the Megalomedia launch; Paul Hamlyn made £31m on Reed Elsevier shares

Amgen and Genentech, which had been built up from scratch.

Dr Lewis was previously vicepresident of product develop-ment at Marion Merrell Dow, huge past losses.

He admitted that the sale "looks unusual", but said that is I consider that these options were part of the package which took me to the company in the similar option sales were "a very, very common occurrence" have come without them." Dr there. He suggested that British Lewis claimed they were part of

Biotech was already looking the "entrepreneurial start-up 48 per cent last Thursday, like US success stories, such as culture" of a company like adding £244m to its stock mar-British Biotech.

Dr Lewis exercised his right to convert 106,695 options at 337p a share. He immediately sold 106,000 at the prevailing market price of £17.60, making a profit of £1.5m on the deal. Mr Noble, finance director, exercised 106,695 at 187p and a further 16,000 at 337p. His sale of 110,000 shares left him with a

gain of £1.7m. The company's shares soared

culture" of a company like adding £244m to its stock market value, after it announced what may be a breakthrough in the treatment of cancer. One deal in the shares went through at over £26 last week, but since

> back, not helped by the news of directors' dealings. City analysis have become excited by the prospects for Marimastat, an oral drug which has shown some effectiveness in

then the share price has fallen

halting the growth or reducing

the size of cancerous tumours suggested eventual revenues could top \$1bn.

However, the results, covering 94 late-stage cancer patients, are only preliminary and the drug has a long way to go before gaining approval from the regulatory authorities. Meanwhile, British Biotech, which was floated at 425p a share in 1992, has yet to show a profit or pay its investors a dividend.

## Saatchis back in the market with a bang

**NIGEL COPE** 

Charles and Maurice Saatchi. the former heads of the Saatchi advertising empire, were £10m better off yesterday when their new investment vehicle made a spectacular return to the stock market. Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones, who owns shares in the company, has also made a significant gáin.

The Saatchi brothers have also emerged as part of a rescue duces magazines for companies team assembled to bail out such as Tesco and Marks & Head, the troubled sports equipment maker. The brothers, who made £25m from the floration of Adidas, will take a 5 per cent stake in the company

Shares in Megalomedia. Maurice Saatchi's vehicle for acquisitions in the multimedia opment. Paul Hamlyn, a nonto 83m on their first day's trading on the Alin trials. Some estimates have ternative Investment Market yesterday. Shares in the company had been suspended at 33p pending the company's first

two acquisitions. The soaring share price values the Saatchis' stake at £14m, compared with £3.5m prior to the re-listing.

Megalomedia, which now has a value of £35m, is the new name for Graduate Appointments Services, a recruitment and said he had no immediate

Maurice Saatchi's wife. The company was listed on AIM carlier this year but renamed pending the acquisition of two media companies. Its return to AIM was overseen by Shaw Capital, which acted as nominated advisers. The Saatchis now account for around 40 per cent of the new company.

Megalomedia has acquired two companies including Forward Publishing, which pro-Spencer. Megolamedia also took a 39.8 per stake in The Framestore, a digital special effects company. It favours an aggressive acqusition strategy in multi-media groups. In a separate media devel-

executive director of publishing group Reed Elsevi-er, has made £21m following the sale of shares in the company. "I had a minor cash-flow prob lem," he said.

He sold two million shares in the company but retains 22 million. Mr Hamlyn received his shares in the company after Reed International acquired Octopus Books in 1987 in a deal worth £535m. It is the first tranche of shares he has sold agency run by Josephine Hart, plans to sell any more.

## Officials dampen hopes of rate cuts

PAUL WALLACE Economics Editor

Hopes for a cut in interest rates when Kenneth Clarke meets Eddie George next week were dampened by Treasury officials giving evidence to MPs on the Budget. However, the Ernst & Young Item Club, which uses the Treasury model, warned that interest rates could have to fall by up to 1.5 per cent to make the Budget strategy work.
Alan Budd, the Treasury's

chief economic adviser, was asked whether growth of 3 per cent could be achieved next year cent could be achieved next year—then pick up. This forecast of without a fall in interest rates. below trend growth in the final interest rate cuts of 1 to 1.5 per ever, he added that there was

Another official, Colin Mowl, who heads the forecasting section, said that the Treasury did not expect that a cut in interest rates would be appropriate to "hurry up" the inventory adjustment that is now generally expected. Several City analysts are warning that a sharp temporary burst of destocking will depress growth in the next six Mr Mowl said that the Trea-

sury thought the economy would grow at 0.4 per cent in the last three months of 1995 and

Mr Budd replied: "Yes, I do quarter took into account an ad-think it is possible." quarter took into account an ad-justment of inventories. Subse-way the government can meet quently, however, the official forecast spreads the effect more generally across next year and

> Mr Budd said that the Budget was neutral in the sense that the tax cuts were matched by spending reductions. However, the continuing downward path of the budget deficit, from £29bn this year to £22.5bn in 1996/7, meant that "in an underlying sense fiscal policy is

In marked contrast to these views, a report by the Ernst & Young Item Club warned that

the budget strategy". Paul Droop, chief economist, said that "recent economic developments have made the target of 3 per cent growth most unlikely. This means interest rate cuts

stimulate the sort of growth Mr Clarke's entire strategy de-Mr Budd said that if the broad measure of the money supply, M4, continued to rise at cent, there would be "increasing causes for alarm" about the

would have to be very large to

tionship between the behaviour of broad money and the outlook for inflation.

The Treasury also cast more light on the drastic downward revision in expected tax revenues next year, from £297bn to £285bn. Tax cuts in the Budget dition three taxes were expected to garner much less than had been forecast at the time of the last Budget.

Income tax receipts would be its present rate of around 9 per Libn less (over and above the tax cuts) because the growth of wage and salaries had been less than expected this year. This would knock through to next year.



**NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS** 

## **NEW INTEREST RATES**

FOR PERSONAL LENDING

With effect from 2nd January 1996	Interest rate % p.a.	Decreased by % p.a.	A.P.R. %
Home Loan Rate	7.75	0.20	8.0
Home Improvement Loan Rate: Loans sanctioned before 26.4.89	9.75	0.20	10.0
Equity Release Loon: First Charge Second Charge	7.75 9.75	0.20 0.20	8.0 10.7
House Mortgage Rate	7.75	0.20	7.9

CREDIT ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE VARIED ACCORDINGLY

The Listening Bank

Member HSBC ( Groun

Midland Bank pic, 27 Poultry, London EC2P 2BX

# boost to Le Shuttle

French transport strikes, discounts on duty-free goods and bad weather in the Channel made November the second most successful month for Eurotunnel's Le Shuttle service, writes Christian Wohnar.

The service carried nearly 130,000 cars, an increase of 7.4 per cent over the previous month and particularly pleasing for the company given that November would normally be a quiet month. Only August, when 135,000 cars went through the tunnel, exceeded November's total. The continuing strife in France is good news for the company and bad weather in the Channel has also been an important factor in making people choose the tun-nel rather than ferries.

Heavy discounting also contributed to the heavy flow. Many travellers have taken advantage of £29 return special offers to stock up on their duty-frees. Oveues of one hour or more have been reported following Eurotunnel's decision earlier this autumn to cut duty-free prices by one-third. Around 12 per cent of customers are specifically travelling through the tunnel for the duty-free goods, a

company spokesman said. The discounting of fares means that the boom in passenger numbers through the hinnel is only mildly good news for the company's beleaguered shareholders but nevertheless shares rose by 4p on the news

INDEPENDENT' SECTION TWO TODAY

## French turmoil gives | Viacom chief warns of danger from Murdoch

MARIANNE MACDONALD viedia Correspondent

The American entertainment tycoon Sumner Redstone has accused his rival Rupert Murdoch of posing a threat to the

ight of free speech. The charman of Viacom International said Mr Murdoch's power to contravene rights enshrined in the US First Amendment lay in his role as a "gatekeeper" - controller of an organisation which controls access to systems that deliver

Mr Murdoch is owner or partowner of the Sun, Times and Sunday Times, BSkyB and Star TV, the rapidly growing Asian satellite network. His interests also include Fox, the American national TV network, a Hollywood movie studio and stakes in

Apart from Ted Turner, the concede 50 per cent to Mr communications magnate, Mr Redstone is seen as the only global media player who could rival Mr Murdoch.

Viacom owns Paramount, the Hollywood studio, the Blockbuster Video chain, MTV Networks, which produces the music video network MTV, and VH-1, a version of MTV for older viewers. Until recently it also owned Madison Square Garden. Mr Redstone criticised Mr Murdoch for controlling distribution of programmes in Eu-

British broadcasting. The 73-year-old New Englander, who built his empire from a tired string of cinemas. said that while Viacom owned network, it had been forced to that power," he said.

Murdoch in Britain. The reason Murdoch owns 50 per cent is that we couldn't

have got a distributor in England any other way." he explained. The Viacom chairman also attacked Mr Murdoch for his efforts to extend the shelf-life of satellite against the threat from cable, saying he had offered cable operators low rates to tie up programming in the long term because he was con-

cerned about the competition. Mr Redstone said: "He really rope and Asia and expressed has got a stranglehold on the concern about his control of market and is finally attracting a lot of scrutiny. Cable would be a competitor except that he's buying up cable programming

by giving special rates. There's nothing wrong with all of the US-based Nick- mergers or wanting to be bigelodeon, the children's cable ger. The question is how you use

### THE INVESTMENT COLUMN Edited by TOM STEVENSON

## Datacom duds overshadow Racal

As always, Racal's figures are a mixed bag in which good performances from ratio of 16. There is plenty of growth a number of extremely promising potential in Racal, but the shares have businesses have been overshadowed by had a strong run over the past few years yet another dismal result from the com- and, with an unexciting yield, they are pany's data products division.

That is unfortunate, because it distracts attention from the company's undoubted entrepreneurial skills and the uncanny knack Sir Ernest Harrison has shown over the years for re-alising shareholder value.

The numbers themselves for the six months to September were in line with expectations - pre-tax profits of £30.1m, up 28 per cent, and a nice 20 per cent rise in the interim payout to 2.1p - so yesterday's share price improvement, up 6p to 276p, was a reflection of the market's welcome for the acquisition of British Rail's inhouse telecommunications supplier for £133m.

Buying in profits of £17.6m, the deal is expected to be earnings-enhancing from day one and dilutes the impact of struggling moderns, credit card terminals and other computer peripherals on the dominant data communications division. Owning the network should open some useful doors in both Whitehalf and the private sector.

That is just as well given the slump into losses of the division once the beneficial contribution of Racal's Camelot

stake is stripped out.
Without Camelot, datacoms made
a £5m loss compared with an £800,000 profit last year, itself a pathetic return on sales of almost £200m.

The company makes two points, both of which carry some weight. First, Camelot is an integral part of the datacoms division - if it were not so high-profile, and the rest of the business so arcane to the average observer, no one would consider stripping it out in the first place.

Second, the division is showing every sign of having bottomed out -new management has an impressive track record in turning around other apparent basket cases. But with no one claiming that break-

even is any closer than 18 months away, data communication is still a heavy drag on the rest of Racal, itself something of a curate's egg.

Margins are under pressure at the biggest earner, Specialised Businesses, the up-front costs of trying to win the Government's Bowman radio contract are draining Radio Comms, and marine and energy work is highly competitive so Racal was more than usually dependent on an impressive 10 per cent return on sales from its defence companies.

Profits for the full year to March are now expected to reach £73m compared with last year's £58.3m, putting the

### Siebe's future looking rosy

Siebe's business mix, ranging from process controls to compressed air, is hardly one to set pulses racing, but it continues to produce one of the best performances in the engineering sector. It is also testimony to the acqui-sition skills of Barrie Stephens, the chairman, who has spent more than £1.3bn in the past 12 years picking up

Yesterday's 21 per cent rise in in-terim profits to £144m for the half-year to September means Siebe makes nearly as much in six months as it made in 12 in 1991. The profits were struck on turnover 19 per cent ahead at £1.2bn and the half-way dividend rises 10 per cent to 4.44p.

The power house of the group continues to be Foxboro, the US group acquired for £357m in 1990 which led the way in automated controls for indus-

months, taking it close to 14 per cent, where it is challenging the industry leaders, Honeywell and Emerson.

That performance helped to spur a the shares at 768p, up 29p, on a for-26 per cent rise in operating profits to ward p/e of 18, which is up with £68m from Siebe's main control systems

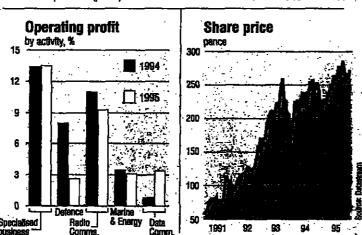
With the launch of new Foxboro products and strong growth rates in capital goods markets across the developed world, the future looks set fair for the operation.

Generally a late-cycle business, process controls has been helped by the maturity of the worldwide economic recovery, but Siebe's strength is reflected in the performance of the more consumer-orientated temperature and

appliance controls business. in a market for white goods esti-mated to be down around 3 per cent this year, the division has done well to raise operating profits 8 per cent to £63.6m. However, although customer stock levels should improve in the second half, lower housing starts in the US and a drop in automotive production could keep the lid on sales growth in the short term.

Aside from the small worries surrounding US consumer markets, the outlook is good for Siebe. Orders up 19 per cent stand at a record £770m and bolt-on acquisitions have still to kick in fully. An extra £10.2m in additional profits has already been squeezed out It has gained a useful one or two of the six picked up last year and the points of market share in the past 12 four acquired so far in 1995 should con-

Ra	ical: a	t a gla	псе		
Marke	t value: £788	im, share pr	ice 227p		
Trading record	1993	1994	1995	1994	1995
Turnsver (£m)	947	916	950	479.8	505.6
Pre-tax profits (£m)	47.7	26.4	58.3	23.5	30.1
Earnings per share (pence)	10.2	5.5	13.6	5.73	7.09
Dividends per share (pence)	4.25	4.25	5.00	2.10	1.75



tribute £8.9m in a full year, even before treatment.

Group profits of £320m would put

### **Acquisitions** pay off for Sage

Technology stocks can have a nasty habit of turning sour, as shareholders in companies such as Tadpole Technology and MDIS will testify. But, so far, Sage Group, the Newcastle-based

writer of accounting software, has proven a welcome exception to the rule. Since its flotation in 1989 the shares bave risen more than tenfold. They jumped a further 13 per cent to 312p yesterday on the back of a bullish endof-year statement. Pre-tax profits for the year to September were up 57 per cent to £22.4m, marginally ahead of ex-pectations, but this alone did not explain the jump in the shares.

A key factor in Sage's success is that, once it secures a customer, it makes much more money from after-sales ser-vice than it does out of the original contract.

Yesterday's news that sales to new customers were up 20 per cent in the UK business and 24 per cent in the US means that more growth is on the way. Sage already has 161,000 support contracts and last year these operations accounted for £48m of the group's £102m

The other part of the Sage model that is working nicely is its approach to acquisitions. Sage's model is to start overseas expansion with a small acquisition which it then knocks into

Saari, the French group that was acquired last year, is a classic example. It contributed 13m in the year and its margins have already been improved from 7 to 11 per cent with more to come. Similar improvements are hoped for at Sybel, the other French business acquired last month.

There are potential dangers. One is a downturn in new customer contracts, which would have a knock-on effect on support revenue.

Another is that of a larger competitor

moving into Sage's niche, although the company's brand name and distribution agreements represent high barriers to entry.

UBS is forecasting profits of £30.4m this year, which puts the shares on a forward rating of 17.

That seems high, but set against ex-citing prospects it is not too demanding. Good value.

## Simon Pincombe CITY DIARY

## Balloon goes up on a top-level Virgin deal



Taking the plunge: Necker, Richard Branson's Caribbean patch

Horizontal integration at the top of Richard Branson's fi-nancial services empire. Tony Wood, the blonde twentysomething responsible for marketing the Virgin Pep, has suddenly taken the plunge with his number two, Rae Canfor. Not known to look a gift horse in the mouth, the young Virgins have accepted the Bearded One's traditional offer to marry on his Caribbean island, Necker, over Christmas.

Mr Branson would normally attend the wedding of two key marketing directors. Un-fortunately, (and it falls to us to confirm the disappointing news to the happy couple) the legendary aviator will not be able to join in the festivities. He will be attempting to lose his life in the most spectacular balloon voyage since the Hindenburg had a spot of

bother on her final approach. Which begs the question as to what would happen to the Virgin empire should the unthinkable happen. Mr Branown job in thrashing out a key man insurance policy. Not that this should concern the honeymooners, who can look forward to the run of the 10-bedroom Guest House, with 26 staff to cater

for their every whim. Still, Mr Branson may yet drop in. Those polar winds are notoriously unpredictable.

At least the betrothed can rest assured that there will be no let-up in the Virgin mar-keting drive. Determined that as many as possible should attend its Christmas party at the Kensington Roof Gardens last night, Virgin Direct sent a minibus to hover outside the National Westminster Bank party in Bishopsgate Hall. Just in case there were any waverers, you under-

Leafing through a battered copy of Charles Forte's autobiography (not the rattling good read the cover would son must have had the devil's | suggest) one can see why the

Melvyn the Money Spider leaves the Kleinwort Benson web to return to his original lair at Barclays de Zoete Wedd. The market-maker in smaller companies' shares (his mother would know him as Melvyn Marks) has already left his desk. "The lucky chap has got the mouth off," says a former Kleinwort colleague who professes not to know why Mr Marks is known as the money spider. "It is because he is small, dark and difficult to get on with," reveals another acquaintance.

Wontner family fought so hard to prevent the restaurateur from gaining full control of the Savoy. Preserved for posterity on the centre pages is a photograph of the origi-nal menu at the Savoy Cafe (no connection to the hotel) which Charles' immigrant father ran in Alloa, Scotland.

The Café, which seated 60 people, was on Alioa's main shopping street. And while the author insists it was "kept spotless and the service was willing and friendly", anything further removed from the synonymous London hotel is difficult to imagine.

The "fancy drinks" (price 8d) did not run to anything more exotic than a Phoenix club soda and a chocolate pluff (don't ask). Similarly the Auto Smash was not the sort of thing you would expect to see on the menu of a top London establishment. Quite what a Hippodrome Phosphate was is anybody's guess.

On the subject of the Forte bid, it seems that Granada was unable to convince the City that its planned diversification was more interesting than the Budget. Attempts to sell a 4.15 briefing on 28 November to one analyst was met with "a full and frank exchange of views".

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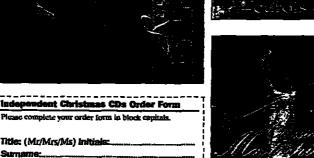
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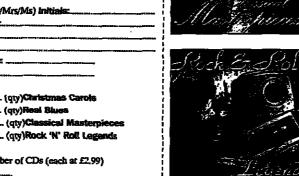
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Wessex Water attacks Charter decision

IN BRIEF

Nicholas Hood, chairman of Wessex Water, attacked as "unsound the Government's decision to refuse Charter mark applications from all water companies because of the severe problems experienced by some firms during the drought. He said that Wessex, which had no water restrictions, had been "surprised and demoralised" by the move. He was speaking as Wessex announced an 18 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits to £68.4m. The half-time payout increases by 13.6 per cent to 5p.

## Strong profits flow at Hozelock

Hozelock, the garden hoses to lighting group, said it had benefited from a strong end to the summer season across Europe as it announced a 32 per cent rise in annual profits to £9.27m vesterday. The company is confident "at this early stage" about prospects for the coming season in all its key markets. Turnover in the year to September jumped a third to £51.5m and a final dividend of 6p raises the total for the year by 18 per cent to 8.7p.

### Pet City placing raises £20m

Pet City, the pet superstore group seeking a listing on AIM, has been priced at 300p a share, valuing the company at £72.8m. The placing was over-subscribed and will raise £20m.

### Leigh Interests halves interim

Waste treatment group Leigh Interests has halved its interim dividend and plans to reduce capacity and costs in the light of current and foreseeable market conditions. The dividend is cut from 2.46p to 1.23p on a £1m fall in interim profits to £4.2m for the six months to September. Turnover rose 5 per cent to £60.6m.

### Eldridge Pope boosts turnover by 31%

Eldridge Pope, the Dorchester-based regional brewer, lifted turnover 31 per cent to £55m and taxable profits by 34 per cent to £3.54m in the year to 30 September. The dividend total is being lifted to 4.6p through a final payment of 2.95p.

### Century Inns targets £22.7m

Century Inns, the owner of 316 pubs, is raising £22.7m via a placing and intermediaries offer of 20 million shares at 120p each. Dealings in the shares are expected to start on 19 December. The price of the offer valued the company at £47.4m.

### Morrison Construction profits double

Morrison Construction, the recently floated building company, announced more than doubled pre-tax profits for the six months to September of £3.18m (£1.54m) compared with a forecast at the time of flotation of not less than £3.06m.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Tersover 2	Pre-tax £	EP8	Divideed				
Allies Collects (3)	23.2m (22.7m)	20.3m (24.2m)	2.81p (3.85p)	0.58p (0.55p)				
Anglian Broup (I)	98.0m (89.4a)	4.5m (10.1m)	3.5p (7.9p)	3.0p (4.1p)				
Eléridge Peper (F)	55.1m (42.1m)	3.54m (2.64m)	13.8p (11.6p)	4.8p (4.1p)				
Hoseleck (F)	51.4m (88.6m)	9.2m (7.0m)	25.8p (20.2p)	8.7p (7.35p)				
Leeds Group (F)	60.5m (52.9m)	7.53m (7.62m)	17.6p (19.3p)	6.8p (6.3p)				
Historic Bectricity (I)	617/p (621m)	92,7m (102m)	37.4p (34.1p)	12.25p (9.3p)				
Northern Ireland Elec (I)	218m (210m)	47.7m (44.3m)	24.3p (21p)	5p (3.9p)				
Racel Entironies (1)	506m (480m)	30.1m (23.5m)	7.09p (5.73p)	21p (1,75p)				
Siebu (1)	1.20bn (1.01bn)	144m (120m)	19.2p (16.2p)	4,44p (4.03p)				
Sage Group (F)	73.1m (50.9m)	22.4m (14.3m)	13.88p (9.98p)	24p (2.18p)				
Triplex Lloyd (1)	97.9m (84.7m)	3.4m (2.5m)	3.7p (2.8p)	25p (2.5p)				
Wester Water (I)	120m (114m)	68.4m (58.2m)	22.7p (20,1p)	5p (4.4p)				
(F) - Fetral (R) - Interfere	(N) - Nine months							

## Midlands pays special dividend

**MARY FAGAN** Industrial Correspondent

Midlands Electricity bolstered its defences against further takeover bids with a £1-a-share special dividend and a £54.60 rebate for customers after next

week's demerger of the Na-tional Grid Company.

A previous agreed acquisition by the generator, PowerGen, lapsed in November after the Government referred it to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Bryan Townsend, chairman, said the move reflected Midlands' underlying strength and ability to go forward "in any eventuality", including as an independent company. He refused to comment on whether there have been approaches by other suitors since Power-Gen's offer lapsed, but he added: There are other options. Other things might hap-pen. If a company bids for us we will have to put it to share-

City analysis said that any fu-ture bid by PowerGen, should marketplace.

the MMC allow it, would now have to be higher than the previous £10-a-share. One said: "This shows that Midlands is a good solid company and that PowerGen will have to come back with something more to gain control." The share price

rose 34p to close at 965p. The merger negotiations cost Midlands £4.9m in the six months to 30 September. PowerGen still has almost 21 per cent of the company and will gain about £40m from the special dividend. Midlands' pre-tax profits fell to £92.7m in the first half of the

year from £102.4m a year earlier, largely due to higher interest costs after a share buy-back and bid costs.
The interim dividend is up 31.7 per cent to 12.25p and the company has said that the full-

year payout will be 37p, an increase of 24.4 per cent. Midlands' gas subsidiary made an operating loss of £1.3m in the six months because of the sharp fall in spot prices and the problems of over-supply in the

## Disposal at buoyant **Triplex** on target

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Triplex Lloyd, the West Midlands based castings group, is in serious negotiations" to sell its last remaining building products operation. Colin Cooke, chairman, said yesterday he expected

engineering division, which has been up for sale for some time. Triplex said it expected to realise something over the net asset value of £7.5m for the businesses now on the block.

company reported sharply same period last year. higher interim profits, up 57 per cent to £5.92m at the operating level, before interest and a £1.48m loss on the sale of th

power division leap from £1.89m to £3.88m. Firth Vickers turned in a "small profit" this time, against losses of around £650,000 in 1994, helping to boost power division margins from 5.1 to 8.5 per cent.

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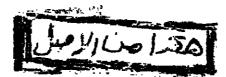
the business to be sold by yearend if there were no hitches.

That would leave another
eight companies still to go in the
engineering division, which has £1.95m.

Triplex's order growth has flattened off in the latest six months, rising by under 1 per cent to £65.2m, compared with The comments came as the a 22 per cent increase in the

Since the year-end, the com-Hempsted Glazing Systems.

Strong demand from the cent. If top expectations are repetrochemical industry and a alised, a further £10m could turnround from losses in one of come from developing a further its high-performance castings. 39 acres near by.



National Grid flotation adds spice to Footsie shake-up The FT-SE 100 share index sions to make which could could be due for its biggest lead to National Grid arriving

shake-up for years. The ven-erable committee that decrees with as many as four other newthe constitution of Footsie Besides fretting about Footmeets today to declare the sie the stock market had to contend with a surprise share winners and losers for the next sale - and the threat of others Its task has been compli-

- by the Government.
It sold 101 million British tional Grid, expected to go into Petroleum shares through SBC the index in the next few days. The Grid's arrival puts in Warburg which picked them up at 508p and pushed them out to institutions at 513p. The exercise knocked BP, jeopardy the continuing Foot-sic membership of London Electric and Midland Electric leaving the shares at 517p,

which have decided to spread their Grid holdings among down from 531p. Until the BP escapade became known shares were doing their best to move in the contend with woeful perforsame direction as a recordmances by some of Footsie's breaking New York. Then came the BP disposal, fuelling stories the Government was unloading stakes in 30 other companies. Although such fears were unfounded, at least



MARKET REPORT DEREK PAIN Stock market reporter of the year

to 125p.

ing 110p to 1,608p but BTG, the old British Technology

Group, continued to romp

Profit warnings hit BTR, off

Acorn Computer was the

14p at 320p, and Allied Col-

loids, the chemical group. 2p

it had developed a receiver that allows surfing on the Internet.

linking television with tele-

run to a grinding halt and of its high-flying status, plung-leave the index 5.5 lower at ing 110p to 1,608p but BTG.

The current array of takeover candidates looked a little limp. Although above their peak. lowest levels GRE finished 6p Pro down at 277p; Legal & General 8p at 681p and Standard Char-

tered 10p at 604p.

Ladbroke, Monday's hot tip, contained its fall to 1.5p at 157.5p while Bass, the perjumping 44p to 192p on reports ceived bidder, dipped 15p to 669p. Pub chain JD Wetherspoon edged ahead 2p to 639p as some suggested it could turn out to be the Bass target.

US computer group is also The bio-babes had another thought to be likely.

Acom's main claim has been eventful session. British Biotech was suddenly stripped its 43 per cent stake in Advance

RISC Machines which has de- Ladbroke, the shares of veloped a new and powerful computer chip. Memory Corporation added 15p to 460p folowing a presentation.

Break-up talk continued to influence Lonrho, up 5p to 172p. and Mercury Asset Management improved 16p to 908p on talk National Westminster Bank, about to sell its US arm, would pounce. Nat West managed an 11p gain to 672p.

Megalomedia. the latest Saatchi vehicle, made an out-standing return to AIM. Suspended at 33p the shares losed at 83p. Celebrated Group made a subdued début. The shares traded at 19p. The company raised £2.25m by a placing at 1Sp. Celebrated has two hotels and five themed restaurants. Manx & Overseas, traded on the Ofex market at 31p, is due to arrive on

AIM next week. As the battle for Forte raged

Queens Most Houses, the debt-laden group once a leading hotel force, gained 1p to the reclusive Barelay brothers.

market report/shares

Etam, the fashion chain, put on 18p to 196p on talk of a renewed South African bid. The Lewis family, through Oceana Investment, own 37.19 per cent.

as the most likely predators.

Aviva Petroleum fell 13p to 42p as takeover talks were called off and Wensum, a clothing group, rose another op to 146p on bid speculation.

Devro International, the sausage skin maker, dipped 2.5p to 234.5p. After the market closed it announced US authorities had agreed to the takeover of Teepak subject to

Christies International, the auctioneer, hardened to 209p as Joe Lewis, a secretive Bahamas-based investor, lift-11.5p in busy trading. The ed his stake to 20.44 per cent, shares have risen 2p this week on talk of a takeover strike with Lewis has been steadily building his Christies stake who recently acquired Lon-don's Ritz for £75m, regarded taken the view he is a passive investor with no intention of bidding. Mr Lewis, who once

ran a London-based leisure business, is believed to speculate in the corrency market. Christies is thought to be his only big corporate investment

Shares of Psion, the hand-held computer group which have romped ahead, hit a buffer when NatWest Securities stopped market-making in the shares. With only Barclays de Zoete Wedd still acting, Psion will be relegated to the obscure Seat market. The shares fell 25p to 835p.

FF-SE-350

18158 21

three months.

their shareholders.

cated by the flotation of Na-

The committee has also to

members; Arjo Wiggins Appleton is now 166p against a

year's high of 290p; De La Rue 648p against 1,054p and Inch-cape 236p against 430p.

So, on the surface, the com-

enough to bring another heady

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OIL EXPLORATION Investing in...

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Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The procedurums (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items Other details: at Ex rights a Ex-dividend a Ex-all a Unisted Securities Market s Suspended pp Parthy Paid pm Nil Paid Shares. Swares Finital.

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# Oats flop worries Beaumont

Racing

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RICHARD EDMONDSON

As Master Oats, the Gold Cup winner, plodded to a standstill at Chepstow on Saturday his performance was a mystery to most, but not to a certain Yorkshireman. He thought the gelding had been doped.

This viewer was no squealing punter from the Ridings, either, it was Peter Beaumont, who trained a Gold Cup winner of his own in 1993, when Jodami was successful.

It remains Beaumont's conviction that Jodami was "got at" the following season when his gelding performed bafflingly in Chepstow's Rehearsal Chase. And when the Brandsby trainer witnessed the latest running of the event at the weekend he could have been excused for checking if the video-machine

was running.
"I don't think it's occurred to anyone else that Master Oats ran like Jodami did in that same race," Beaumont said

"When it was happening on Saturday we all said that was exactly like we were two years ago. Master Oats was under pressure from half-way and then he made a bad mistake. Jodami did finish when he ran, but it was

### **Jockeys** are scolded by angry Rowe

Local trainer Richard Rowe described yesterday's abandonment of racing at Plumpton because of snow as an "absolute ioke". The meeting was cancelled after the jockeys had been recalled from the start of

Rowe, who had a runner in each of the last three scheduled races, said: "I don't blame the stewards - the jockeys panicked. It was snowing, but two

RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Sharp Imp (Lingfield 1.10) NB: Douce Maison (Leicester 3.00)

minutes after the abandonment there was brilliant sunshine. At four o'clock, an hour and a half afterwards, there's not a snowlake in sight, and you could easily run two races. Stewards have to be guided by wait to get home. What are they rushing home for? Neigh-

Frost and snow is a threat to several other race meetings this

### RESULTS HUNTINGDON

HUNTINGIA.N:
12.30: 1. BARRETS GET (M Brennan) 82. Nocetchis 4-1; 3. Featurays 5-1. 12
1. 100-30 fay Wordsmith (pulled up). 342.
4. (O Brennan, Worksop). Totae £8.70;
5. 45.41, CSS. an. 100-30 fay Wor 144. (O Brenner, Worksop). Total £6.70; £2.50, £2.20, £1.10. DF; £15.10. CSF: 1,00: 1. SHELAS HILLCREST (S. Haworth)

9-1; 2. Skeeling Affair 8-1; 3. Corly Sp. 12-1, 7 ran. 11-10 fav Sharp Performer 2, 1. (N. Mason, Wishum). Total: £14.50; £2.90, £3.50. DF: £45.60. CSF: £69.01. 1.30: 1. BROCTUME BAY (P. Niver) 9-2; 2. Run For Desets 12-1; 3. Effas Evers fay.

1.30; 1. BROCTUNE BAY (\*) Neerl 9-2;
2. Ran For Dente 12-1; 3. Effas Berns far.
8 can. 8, 11/4. (htr. M Revoley, Saltzun), Totas
54.90; 51.20, 12.60, 52.00. DF £28.40. CSF.
551.42. Vincast: 537.04.
2.00; 1. ANNER MELLY (6 Daton) 7-1; 2.
Newshall Prince 11.10 for; 3. Fingleack Lad
5-2, 7 ren. 3, 5. (J Wherton, Melton Monbray), Totas 59.0; 53.60, £1.40. DE £9.10.
CSF. £1.48.
2.80; 1. Fiscants (P Hole) 1.4-1; 2. Weslab
MEL 11-2; 3. Niconics Soltman 40-1. 19 ran.
Evens for Hawles Hunter (pulled up), 1/4, 37/4.
U Glond, Pridon), Totas £11.60; £2.10, £1.60,
£7.60. DE: £27.50. CSF. 598.20. Trice
£508.40 (part word, NR; Rivel Bid.
3.00; 1. MASTER GROCHESTRA: JF Tidey)
6-4 fax; 2. Sadige Wentlers 12-1; 3. Challie
Richards: 14-1; 17 ren. 37/2, 20, (Miss H
Nogri, Warringe), Totas £9.20; £1.60; £4.50,
£5.00. DF: £27.40. CSF. £24.64 Trice
£15.63.80. NR; The Booley House.
3.30; 1. MISHITY MOSS (Ak F Husshy) 101; 2. Pottast's Gaile 5-1; 3. Tillyboy 9-2, 1.6
ran, 4-1 for Golden Punch, 3, 1/4, (D Netholson, Temple Gutring), Teas £18.90; £3.50,
£3.30; £1.70. DF: £31.30. CSF. £71.94.
Placeport: £777.20. Quandoot: £28.80.
Hears £ £739.53. Places £: £37.97.

Placepot: £777-20. Quadpot: £29.60. Place 6: £789.53. Place 5: £337.97. PLUMPTON

PLIMPTON
(Meeting abundance Julian Index)
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12.15: 1, FAISE CREEK (M Richards)
12.15: 1, FAISE CREEK (M Richards)
12.25: 1, FAISE CREEK (M Richards)
12.45: 1, FAISE CREEK (M Richards)
13.10, £1.70, £7.10, DF: £19.00, CSF:
£75: £1. Trus: £25.30, MF: Radia
12.45: 1, QUEENFORD BELLE (G F Richards)
12.45: 1, QUEENFORD BELLE (G F Richards)
13.10; £2.00, £1.50, £2.30, DF: £19.90,
CSF: £27.91, Trus: £16.00, MF: Mrs Barty,
1.15: 1, LE CHAT NOR! (D Bridgester)
12.1: 2, The Carrot Man 5-6 Rar; 2, Supper Teactes
11-2, 8 ran, 114, 10, (D Grassel,
145: 1, LE CHAT NOR! (D Bridgester)
12.1: 2, The Carrot Man 5-6 Rar; 2, Supper Teactes
11-2, 8 ran, 114, 10, (D Grassel,
145: 1, HEAD FOR HEAVEN (G Bradley)
9-4; 2, Challenger Row Evens £ar; 3, Varro
25-1, 6 ran, 3, dist. (R Hoad, Levels), Total
25-6; [2.10, £1.20, DF: £1.50, CSF: £4.60,
Planspot: £17.40, Quadpot: £1.90,

THE INDEPENDENT Horse Racing Results 0839 - 111 171 Commentary 9839 - 111 175



only his courage that got him his attendants feared he was

The similarities are indeed striking. When Jodami went over the Severn Bridge as the Blue Riband victor he was considered to be in peak condition having heaten the odds-on Cab On Target at Haydock; Master Oats, who had won first time out for the previous two seasons, was considered to be in his bestever nick for a seasonal debut on Saturday.

diverge from there. Jodami was sent off a 2-7 favourite in a small field before blundering away his chance three out. He finished third, behind Party Politics and Riverside Boy (who was 20th out of the handicap). After the race, Jodami blew so hard that

Christopher Sporborg, a stew-

ard, banker and permit trainer, was nominated by the Jockey

Club yesterday to succeed Lord

Hartington on the British

chairman of United Race-

courses, owners of Epsom, Sandown and Kempton,

Sporborg will take up his new

position from 7 June 1996 and

Currently best known as the

Horseracing Board.

serve for four years.

close to a heart attack.

Pages listing for paramedics finished at his shortest price of had already been turned down at the corner, but Jodanni scampered down the ramp of his box like a lamb on Prozac. When the vet attended, the horse was so well in himself that he looked ready for a canter. Tests uncovered nothing to explain his display. There was nothing The tale of two paties does not proved, but we all had our thoughts after the race," Beaumont said.

While there were some who fancied Saturday's winning outsider Grange Brake (who

chairman of the BHB since its

inception but Sporborg is not

expected to stand for election

to that post, enabling Lord

\_\_\_\_ids T Spenio/ \_\_B Pr

3.00 Silver Shred

2.00 SPARTAN SELVER (nap) 3.30 Once More For Luck

GOING: Chase crums - Good to Firm (Good in pascus); manusc crumse crumse (with soft panches).

Right-hand, inidiating course, with a straight role. Run-in of 280yds.

Course is 2 miles south-east of city off A5. Leicester railway station (London, St. Pancrass - Sacrifield Rus) over 2 miles away, ADMISSION: Chib 512; Tattersulls 58; Silver Ring 54. (accompanied under-15s fine). CAR PARK: Free, Silver Ring Car Park - \$10 admits car and four occupients.

ILEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: M C Pipe - 19 winners from 73 runners gives a success ratio of 28.5% and a loss to £1 level stake of £23.87; Mrs J Pirman - 13 winners, 56 runners, 32.2%, £11.01; D Nöcholaso - 12 winners, 42 runners, 28.6%, ±£147.94; O Sharwood - 5 winners, 14 runners, 35.7%, ±£17.94.

■ LEADING JUCKITS: R Dunwoody - 11 winners, 58 rides, 19%, ±28.16; A Maguire - 9 winners, 56 rides, 18.1%, ±22.96; W Manston - 7 winners, 47 rides, 14.9%, ±\$10.21; C Liewellyn - 6 winners, 38 rides, 33.1%, ±£7.54.

WINNERS IN TRE LAST SEVEN DATE: None.

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Jyanjam Johnny (1.00) has been sent 193 miles by J J O'Neighton Shekim Wood End, Cambria.

100 BRCH HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 4f 110yds Penelty Value £2,574

| 22P2-P5 | PUMPER BMY (RSA) (20) (C) (C) (E S & W V Robins) N Handeson 4 12 12 ... M A Florid CIT-001 ... M A Flo

– 10 decimud – Minimum neight: 10st. True hardings weight: Escape Talk Sat Ob. BETTRIK: 7-2 fyrighau Johnny, 4-1 No Ught, Twice A Night, 5-1 Plunder Boy, 7-1 Sickerman, 8-1 Our

Selections and the country of the selection of the set of strong the selection of the selec

1.30 CHESTNUT CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' SELLING HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,600 added 2m Penalty Value £1,994

SATEMP DIRECTRIME A RELIGION 0 SD 12 \_\_\_\_\_\_ 15 Footor DOP-O WHATEMPEUSHY (10) 8 Bonfield 7 10 12 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 Lee (2) QUIT DEMPTS DELINER (1748) T Etheorigen 8 10 7

060-3. Mass LAMPLISM (21) F Mutaga 5 10 7 \_\_\_\_\_ B Harding (2) 60-4 RASCRILLY (11) Med C School 5 10 7 \_\_\_\_\_ F Looky (5)

- 17 decisived - personal - 7-2 langulari, 5-1 Records, 6-1 Whethingways, 7-1 Deleases, 8-1 Mass Lampings, 12-1 Ros On The Run, 14-1 others

1.20 DICKIE DODS MEMORIAL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 3m 3f

2211-15 IRON Y (27) Mrs M Rendey 9 12 0 \_\_\_\_\_\_ 9 Cabill (7)
4-41111 SOUTH WESTER! (8) Mrs M Rendey 7 11 4 \_\_\_\_ 6 Lee (3)
5-618-3 TROUGH (10) Mrs S Augin 9 11 3 \_\_\_\_ D Williamson
23676-5 MORRHOR IN MAY (9) JM STRINGT 7 11 1 \_\_\_\_ P Carbotry
0-51325 TOWN TEST (11) Mrs I Goodelow 10 0 \_\_\_\_ B Storey

-6 decigned -BETTING: 5-4 South Westerly, 4-1 then Y, 5-1 Treades, 6-1 Tengh Test, 7-1 Claudic Statument, 12-1 Norsing to May

1.50 NAGS HEAD MARDEN CHASE (CLASS E) \$4,000 added 3m 3f

50755 P MISTER HOGERAND (No) Mis V Ward 9 11 0..... D Perfor (3)

42-6541 (1ASSIC STATEMENT (41) (CD) | Hollers 9 10 0 ...

lay Master Oats against his two rivals. There were several When his box returned home recorded wagers of £2.000 and to Foulrice Farm, the Yellow £1,000 before the nine-year-old

> All went well until the chestnut, like Jodami. tried to take on a fence with the vigour of a bull at a cape. "He gave me the feel of a Gold Cup winner for a circuit, going through the mud like no other horse I have ridden," Jamie Osborne, the jockey, reported, "but, turning for home, the engine just stopped running."

Master Oats, who was pulled up after four out, was found to be blowing abnormally hard touched 14-1 and 16-1 before and sweating profusely, which his trainer, Kim Bailey, conalso bookmakers prepared to sidered to be a symptom of in-

**Banker to fill Hartington's seat** Lord Hartington has acted as The BHB hopes eventually to

> Wakeham to become the new Also the deputy chairman of Hambros plc, Sporborg has held a number of positions within racing but his member-ship of the Tote Board will be of particular value to the BHB.

acquire the betting organisation and Sporborg's nomination will double its representation following Peter Jones' appointment to the Tote earlier this year. Lord Hartington will be

standing down along with Michael Darnell, the board's Industry Committee member who does not intend to seek reelection when his term of appointment expires. 

Penalty Value £3,655

500-40 SUPPOSEN (11) () Nemp) Nrs 5 Smith 7 10 0...

PETITING: 5-4 Challenger do Luc, 5-2 Februrasscretary, 7-1 Same 1 Andrean, 14-1 Lobeter Cettage, 15-1 Seabelet 1994: Sporten Sites 8 11 0 J R Rawring) 10-1 IN Gaselee 8 cm

fences. None of the others has much to recommend, although Rafter-J is a winner on the Fat and has more chance than his hundles form suggests. Selection: VAGSIO.

2.00 SYCAMORE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3m

All Meleges 10 11 13 A Magairs 4-1 (D Meleges 1) 3 an Execution 13 A Magairs 4-1 (D Meleges) 13 an Execution 13 A Magairs 4-1 (D Meleges) 13 an Execution 13 A Magairs 4-1 (D Meleges) 13 an Execution 14 A Magairs 4-1 (D Meleges) 15 an Execution 15 A Magairs 4-1 (D Meleges) 15 A Meleges 15 A Mele

1994: Meleaghs 10 11 13 A Magairs 4-1 (D Nichoson) 13 an FORM CRUIDE.

Having won so well at Kempton on his comeback, GELPA VALLI's defeat by High Podre at Marker, Rasen was not quide the setback it seemed after the winner went on to take a better race at Newcastle. Gilba Valu has regarded winning form since then with a combination to a progressive six-year-old and may be equal to the challenge. Over The Stream ran so well from 17th out of the handicap when third to Young Hustler at Aintree last time and might even have been second had he jumped the last two better. He had been unbeaten in three previous runs that season, though there is no question he was a little forunate to have held Romany Creek by a nack at Stratford in October after the runner-up had blundered at the fourth last. Romany Creek made up for that with a deleat of Nirtha at Cartiste soon after and was wirthour his usual visor when only timp behind Gilpo Valu's stabilemate.

soon after and was without his usual woor when only third behind Glipa Valu's stablemate Smith's Band, at Wincardon last time. While Romany Creek is undoubtedly suited by a longe

tion, this is a stiff three miles and at the very least he has every chance of putting the recon straight with Over The Stream on 4th better terms. Nicklop got her jumping together at Tow cester last month and was able to put lest season's frustrating time behind her. Even ther

when made hard work of and Spartner Sher has a bettler chance. He was staying on when lest of three to James Pag at Huntington on his reappearance and will be all the bettler for it. Spartner Sher stands his career under Rules by beating Smith's Band here last season and was also funner up to decent horses in two other starts.

2.30 SPRUCE NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £3,236

1/434-P JACKSON FLINT (32) (Nr. L 6 Turner) Thomson Jones 7 11.7 M A Ritzgerald BOOK-14 SEATMEST (15) (Nr. L 6 Turner) Thomson Jones 7 11.7 M A Ritzgerald BOOK-14 SEATMEST (15) (Nr. L 14 Turner) Thomson Jones 7 11.7 M A Ritzgerald AF5-36F AEDEAN (38) All B Other Patterd of Englis 6 11.0 JR Ritzgerald 21231-2 CHALLENGER DU JULC (FR) (14) U & J. Secuntes Lunted) M Pipe 5 11.0 JR Ritzgerald P2200-3 PROTURESECRICIARY (15) (87) (K G Mariey) D Nicholson 6 11.0 W Mariston O/L LOSSTER COTTAGE (209) (Major Gen R L T Burgles) K Balley 7 11.0 A Thomston 200-135 SAME DIFFERENCE (35) (Androse Turnhall) A Janes 7 11.0 A P McCoy - 7 declared - 7 dec

FORM GUIDE

All of CHALLENGER DU LUC's races have been on an easy surface but there is no reason to suspect the useful hurdler will not be as effective on this faster ground. He is a note, tak gelding and, apart from a mistake bour out, did everything night at Chepstow a forthight ago on his chasing debut only to be touched oil by Seek. The Faith. He looks quite a prospect. Phdyreasecretary had some form in point to points in reland and was only buding his lime over hurdles last season. He made his chasing debut at Cheftenham 15 days ago and would

ories, and believes instead that his horse broke a blood vessel. as he has done before. That, though, was over two years and 11 runs before Saturday when Master Oats broke so badly at Uttoxeter that his

ternal problems. The Upper

Lambourn trainer, it must be

said, has no time for doping the-

trainer feared he would bleed to death. There was no sign of the red stuff on Saturday and little indication that the horse was an invalid in the days that fol-"There wasn't a scope at Chepstow, so we couldn't scope

the horse and if you'd looked

down his throat 24 hours later

it would have shown nothing."

Bailey said yesterday. "We have

to drop him down now and build him back up again, put him into his work, scope him, and look again in a week's time.
"Every time a horse, especially a Gold Cup horse like him. runs badly you hear these stories about horses being 'got at'. but 99.9 per cent of the time

something appears within 10 days to explain it." Before the end of next week then, we may have evidence of a burst blood vessel; if not there is likely to be, in the minds of people, including Peter Beaumont, another rupture one in the integrity of the sport.



Jodami and his regular jockey Mark Dwyer after their Gold Cup triumph in 1993

Photograph: Sporting Life name given Rusge Beruland Beauthouse something to think about had he not brundered at think earth and again thee tendes jobr. That was a long beginning and he is one to have somitiolensuity mith not be brindlanger here. Jackson Flatt, was although on the obtains when turboarning about he out in a strong comest of Chepston last time. He had during worth

) CH	ecuoir :	NUMBER OF THE	ı
3	.00	ASH MARES ONLY NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m Penalty Value £2,721	
:		BONTA BLAKENEY (21) John Hind Ale Sileon Stady G Stature 5 11 0	ľ
		BOOLAYOOLE (SBD : loss Matrice) 0 032-4 5 11 0	L
,		B1.774805 HALL -0 C 5 Cooper M Cagnité-5 11 0 W Worthington	ı
•		CRITIC CERLON May V (Magne) Mrs II Percin; 4 11 0	
	22-0	COOLE HELL (21) Messa S Wickels and J Poster D Nationary 4 11 0 W Margion	
		DOUCE MAISON (13) Att 500 End ) A Lines - 11 ()	ı
-		9800 A (16) U.S. Ferwati, Mrs. D. Hans, 6 11 9	ı
,	365	ALEDOS PREMICESS (13) (Date Tuchness Astr. A Mangriph 5 11 ()	П
•	6	PASIA (25) #116am.n. 5 Golongs # 11 0 J Osborne	П
12		QUICK QUOTE (273) 74 4 D Barba ( Urs 1/45* 5 11 0	ı
Ŀ	}-	RUBY'S GRI, (221) 6 thgram Andrew Turnel 5 11 0	ŧ
2	5005-7	SCAMALLACH (11) 6/25 Susan McCattle / Henling 5 11 ()	1
3	1÷	SILVER SHRED (200) D M Borestort M Pige 4 11 0 D Bridgester	1
4	CCC	STRATHBORE LODGE (404) () M. Jeferson, J. Jeferson 6 11 QR Quans	ł
5	2-23	SUPPEME LADY (21) (8F) (The Supreme Libby Partnershot Libra H Knight * 11 () Li F (filley	ł
6	P	YENGENA (385) Nrs 14 Nexots P Speer - 11 0 E Husband (3)	Ł

BETTING: 5-2 Supreme Lady, 4-1 Coole Hill, 5-1 Silver Sired, 8-1 Cellic Cellidh, 10-1 Douce Majon, 12-1 Impla, 16-1 others 1994: Married O: Glacy 3 11 2 G Brabley 7-1 D Generally, 15 ran

her reappearance when some way down the field in the bumper in which was third to hendord lina at Hereford. All three of these titles are capable of making wanning start over number.

142424	FRUR AND FANCY (FR) (247) (D) (The F And F Partnersky) Miss M 🐯 🐠 👉 😁 🕒
	. Fichard Goest
5/00/-60	FLY BY NORTH (USA) (6) (Ford Farm Racing) D Natholson 7 11 7 X Akapeni (7)
322-040	HASHAR (13) (D) (P Wegram) P Wegram 7 11 7 T Bey
510-3PU	BANANA COVE (G) G F Cherry! W Cay 4 11 4
308610-	MECADO (280) (Alatsword Ltd) F Yerdey 8 11 0 D Gallegher
402250-	SHARED GOLD (329) (D) (P 4 Dext) J Rosky 5 to 13 M Bookey
00(6-0	MY LINDIANNE (345) (CD) (8 Sae) J Doolar & 10 0
0P52P40	MASTER NUMBER (14) (N/s Sandy Herrotee: C Bross 6 10 0 W Marston
	- 9 declared -
	ber 10er True handiren warder: Mr. I aufenne Gel 5th Master Martin Sel 3th

Minimum wegin: 10st. The handcap wegins: My Lindsone 9st 50s. Master Murphy 9st 50s. BETTING: 5-4 Opce More For Luck, 4-1 Fly By North, 6-1 Fair And Fancy, Banasa Cove, 7-1 Hashar,

A penalty and some indifferent hurding at times prevented ONCE MORE FOR LUCK following up his his winning start at Wetherby toot season. He still made mistakes when making a successful cometack at Cariste recently, having won on the Flat in the meantime, but he was winning easily untuil tiding in front and has the scope to handle a 6th rese Fall And Fancy was not too far behind Once More For Luck on their juvenile form and comes here.

a miser current race, at Assort and that expenence should give firm an advantage, over most

Sek	ection: '	CHALLENGER DU LIX	
3	.00	ASH MARES ONLY NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m Penaity Value £2,721	
:		BONSTA BLAKENEY (21) John Himthith & Leaf State & State & 11 0	ľ
:	364	<b>ROOLAYOOLE (586)</b> #09 M まかいりの32-3 5 11 0 V Slattery	i
,		BLZZAROS HALL G C 5 Casper Ut Classifier 5 11 0	
•		COLTIC CERLIDAY MAN V Malerter Min M Pereity 4 11 0	
	22-:	COOLE HELL (21) Messa 9 Wickes and ) Proces () Nationary 4 11 ()	i
5	3	DOUGE MAISON (13) 35% Ann Erres A Lares - 11 0	
7	5	R201A (16) U.S. Ferwati (16) D. Haans, 6:119	
,		ALDOS PRINCESS (13) (Date Increes Ast A Margron 5 11 ()	П
•		PASIA (25) 4 11 Bart. 7, 5 Goldings 4 11 0 Ochome	Ш
12		QUICK QUOTE (273) NA N D Barlow) Mrs 1 Mark 5 11 0	ľ
Ŀ		RUBITS CRR. (221) 6 Higram Ancres Turnel 5 (1)	Ł
2		SCAMALLACH (11) 6/25 Susan McCastri, / Jenking 5 11 ()	١,
3		SILVER SHRED (200) (D.M. Borestort) M. Pige 4 11 0	ı
4	0.33	STRATHMORE LODGE (404) () M. Jeflerson, J. Jeflerson 6 11 QR Quans	ł
5	2:23	SUPPRIME LADY (21) (SF) (The Supreme Libe; Partnershot Libe; H Knight 4 11 () Li F littley	ı

A suff course such as this and softer ground often finds out some of the Flat racers – they just do not have the stamma of the jumping-bred stock. While that might be the case with **Douce Maison**, an encouraging third to Hawker Hunter and Blair Castle at Tauritor farming out, CELTIC CELIDH could be a different proposition. She was a strong-finishing second to Misty Silis in a mile handleap on soft ground here earlier in the year and has second, after the first the first strong Gale filly out of a Menetek intary and could not be better bred for the (ob. She won and was second, almost note langths in first of hurt) placed Silver Stred from her two bumper runs last season but was a httle dispute in the manufactured after some way down the field in the bumper in which.

3.30 OAK HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 211 Penalty Value £2,343

### Konsette O 23-FFOU MORE JOY (8) Mrs L Marshelf 7 11 0 .... 534-424 PUSSIAN CASTLE (16) J Wade 6 11 0 ... WOODWILLA (225) T Car 7 11 D. 0050U-5 JUST MOLLY (30) W Reed 8 10 9 .... 12.50 Madsled 1.20 South Westerly 1.50 Aly

Daley 2.20 Precipice Run 2.50 The Toaster 3.20 Wild Rose Of York (nb) 2.20 HARDWICK ARMS HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added to stakes 2m

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Easy (ences and long run-in on chase course of 500 pds.

Course is less than one mile south-west of the nown near juncchase course of 500yds.

© Course is less than one mile south-west of the nown hear junction of A689 and A177. A ban service from Stockton railway sistem (nine miles sway) or Durham railway suiton (nine miles sway).

ADMESSION: Paddock 57 (OAPs 53.50); Course 52. CAE PARES. WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Flush Of Books (2:20)

A Desert Fighter (3.20) won at Camerick on Wednerday.

LONG-DISTANCE EUROMEES: Scanic Me (2.20) & Wille Sparkle
(2.50) here been sent 154 miles by Mns S Bradherne from Ladybank,

12.50 GOLDEN LION 'NATIONAL HUNT' NOVICE HUROLE (CLASS E) £2,800 2.50 HOPE INN HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £4,000 added 2m 5f added 2m 5f 110vds POUCS DALUSSAM (18) J Block 7 10 12 B Storey

FOUR DALUSSAM (18) J Block 7 10 12 B Storey

FOUR DALUSSAM (18) J Block 7 10 12 B Storey DALUSMANI (19) J Shiett 7 10 12.... HERELAND WAY MAIN. Roductor 7 1 HERELAND WAY Marks Todayster 7 10 12 \_\_\_\_\_\_ R G MASSEN BROOK Williams 7 to 12 \_\_\_\_\_ G Harless
OPO Need CRUSSE (207) I Howard Johnson 5 10 12 \_\_\_ P Carberty
O24 ONE MORE BELL (JO) I Wads 5 10 12 \_\_\_\_ K Jones 090F ORWELL ROSS (1353) F Peby 7 10 12 090F PERCY PT (209) H Molander 6 10 12 0330-5 BON ON THE BUIN (189 I Quinn 5 10 12

Minimum weight 10st. True handican weights Rebel Yong 9st 12th, Doxford MI SS VA. BETTORE: 5-2 lee White, 4-1 The Teaster, 5-1 Wille Sparkle, 6-1 Notable Bospiles, 8-1 July Box Elly, 10-1 Bed Trade, 12-1 Douburd Hot, 14-1

3.20 DUN COW NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,600 added to stakes 2m 1f 110yds

134 NONDOS (16) (87) 6 Moore 4 12 0 Callegium. R. 21401 DESERT PREFER (7) Mrs M. Reveley 4 11 11 M. Hernlegton (7) 312113 YELD ROSE OF YORK (18) (35) P Moresth 4 11 8. 3-14 GSMETNAL CHAOS (13) (0) 11 0 Neil 5 11 2 \_\_\_ A Rocke (3) DSUM-10 ENEW (23) 1 Quan 5 11 2 M Dayor Ph-2 BUCKUEY BOYS (12) (8F) A Bailey 4 10 8 T Knet Quo-530 WARRESAUESPRINCESS (88) 8 Elison 4 10 2 . B Handley (3) PO(0000 GULERA (320) R Cage 7 10 0 \_\_\_\_\_\_ B Storey

Bintrum seight 10st. Tue hendiag seight Guer 4 9st 10th.
BETDNR 5-4 Decent Fights, 11-4 Nacion, 4-1 Wed Stoce of York, 5-1
General Chees, 10-1 Bunkley Hoys, 12-1 Erlay, 25-1 others

Tony Dobbin yesterday postponed his craneback until next ek, thus giving up the ride on One Man in the Tommy Whitthe Chase at Haydock on Sanarday. The jockey broke his hand and dislocated a shoulder three weeks ago. Mark Dwyer has been offered the mount but cannot confirm his availability until con-

### LINGFIELD

ecretary, 7-1 Same Difference, 8-1 Jackson Flint, 12-

12.40 Newington Butts 1.10 Sharp Imp 1.40 Ballynakelly 2.10 Camden's Ransom 2.40 Ballymoney 3.10 Banzhaf 3.40 Whatever's

STALLS: 51 & 1m - outside; remainder - cracke DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low Install to 31 140yds Left-hand, sharp undutating course. Run-tr of 200 yds.
Course is wouth-east of town on B20138 Edenloying roun. Long-

field railway station (served by London Victoria) adjours course ADMISSION: Members \$10, Tattersalis \$5; Silver Fong \$4, CAR PARK: Chib \$3; remainder free. BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Beambolme 1: (0). Thunderons

2.10); Komodo (3.40); Lahudd (visored, 3.56) WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DATS: Ballynakelly (1.10) wor 10) was at Lingfield on Thursday. DNG-DISTANCE EUNNERS: Southern Dominion (1,10), Mil-

12.40 EQUITABLE HOLDINGS HANDICAP (CLASS E) (DIV I) £3,900 added 5f 

1.10 EQUITABLE HOLDINGS HANDICAP (CLASS E) (DIV II) £3,900 added 5f

1.40 ROB ROT HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,400 added 1m 5f

30050 JUN M Johnson 3 9 10 J Williams 11, 30050 JUN M Johnson 3 9 10 G Darffeld 8 04500 WOLLMER (70) F 05 John 3 9 6 G Darffeld 8 04500 WOLLMER (70) F 07 J 5 John 6 9 C Paradiscot (7) 10 

## - 11 declared -- 11 declared -BETTING: 9-4 Bollynei, By, 4-1 Yougo, 9-2 Broughton's Formula, 5-urtoer, 10-1 Outstayed Welcome, Williamie, 15-1 Others 2.10 SYRUP OF FIGS LIMITED STAKES (CLASS F) £3,650 added 1m 2f

2.40 PRINCE OF DARKNESS MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS F) £3,650 added 270 7f 16 (GO)06 ROWLANDSONS CHARM (26) G1 Mooro 7 12 \_\_M Adams 8 

3.10 FAIRFAX DATA PROCESSING NURSERY HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,400 added 240

SETTING: 7-4 Bandod, 3-1 Mol Carard, 5-1 Descing Jack, 7-1 Rising Stream, 8-1 Grazious Gretzie, 10-1 Robull, 12-1 Time Clash

3.40 LADBROKE ALL-WEATHER TROPHY HANDICAP (QUALIFIER) (CLASS E) £4,400 added 1m

## Wigan vs Bath on League's agenda

sport

Rugby League DAVE HADFIELD

The Rughy Frontball Union has confessed to what would once have been unthinkable - seriously discussing a showdown be-

tween Bath and Wigan. The RFU secretary, Tony Hallett, vesterday held talks with the Rugby League's chief executive, Maurice Lindsay, in London about the idea. "We are not necessarily against the scheme, but insurance, safety, law and playing matters will need to be looked into," Hallett suid, "Both league and union are united in considering the scheme."

The Wigan chairman, Jack Robinson, who has spoken to Bath and started the ball rolling by approaching Lindsay, said: We are in the entertainment business and we've never been afraid to have a go at anything."

May is the likely time for the two-match series, one under each set of rules, but Robinson says that finding suitable dates could be problematic. Appropriately. Wigan's board will tonight discuss when Orrell will be able to play the first of their projected games at Central Park. The local rugby union club had hoped to stage their Pilkington Cun fixture against Harlequins there on 23 December, but Wigan are concerned about had weather damaging their pitch three days before their Boxing Day derby against St Helens. Orrell's Courage League game against Saracens on 30 December is now likely to be their first on league territory.

Wigan have made an offer to the All Black squad member, Junior Tonu, who is primarily a scrum-half in union. "He is like a bigger version of Frano Boti-ca. Robinson said.

Bradford Bulls have signed the South Sydney and former St George prop, Jeremy Donougher, on a two-year contact. Swinton have secured two members of Tonga's World Curo squad. Willie Wolfgramm, a half-back who was once with Manly, and Talne Liava'a. Leigh, however, have had to abandon their plan to sign two members of the Cook Islands winning side in the Emerging Nations World Cun, because they cannot get them work permits.

Blackpool Gladiators and a Galashiels, the Border Reivers. will today apply for membership of the Rugby League and for places in the Second Division next season.

### FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS FORECAST

FA Carling Premiership Bolton v Interpool
 Chetse's v Newcostle
 Chetse's v Newcostle
 Covently v Blackburn
 Manchester Ltd v Sheffield 'Med
 Meddlesbrough v Manchester City
 Southenpron v Attenda
 Tortenham v Queen's Park Rangers

Endsleigh Insurance League First Division 8 Semingram v Watford ... 9 Crystel Palace v Oldnam 10 Denty v Barnsley.......

Second Division

16 Bradford City / Peterborou 17 Brentford / Bristol Rovers 18 Brighton / Bournemouth 19 Bristol City / Notis Court) Third Division

15 Runcom v Woking.

Bell's Scottish League Premier Division

First Division

54 Christiani v Anthe 55 Dunizarion v St Mirron 56 Dunizarion v St Mirron 56 Dunizarion v Borton 57 Hamilton v Morton 58 St Johnstone v Dundre Utd 

FIVE AWAYS: Nevessies Utt, Swindon Town, Dorlington, Hodnesford Town, Dundes Utd. TEN NOMES: Maintensies Utd. Bernington Ox, Iranmere Rovers, Burnley, Oxford Utd. Northampun Town, Phymouth Anglie, Preston North End, Stevenage Borough, Rangers.

At county level he plays like a god; in Tests, heaven help him. David Liewellyn investigates a cricketing mystery

# THE RAMPRAKASH CONUNDRUM

ike Atherton and Jack Rus-sell apart, the most vivid mage of the Johannesburg Test was Mark Ramprakash's twoball, rabbit-in-the headiights humiliation in England's second innings. His first ball from Brian McMilian crashed into his pads, the second went through a desperate off drive and shattered his stumps, and perhaps rather more.

In England mode, Ramprakash is rather like the Marie Celeste: the lights are on but no one is at home. He has floundered throughout his Test career, apparently overwhelmed by the international arena. All that prodigious talent, which has seen him recognised by his peers as the most gifted batsman of his generation, suddenly and mysteriously deserts him.

So why this conundrum? Why cannot that talent be translated from the County Championship, through which he sails, into something more tangible than a couple of half-centuries and a plethora of belowpar performances in 19 appearances in the bigger pond?

His county captain is Mike Gatting, who hit his first Test century on his 31st appearance for England. He has done much to bring Ramprakash along since the young-ster's Middlesex debut when he was 17 in 1987. It was no surprise to learn that he was going to telephone South Africa yesterday to speak to Ramprakash. "Not necessarily to talk about cricket," Gatting stressed. "It's just to see how things are. If he wants to talk about it, I will, but I'm not specifically phoning up to talk about it."

Well, like Bob Hoskins says, "It's him in County Championship. good to talk, and Gatting has his feet firmly on the ground. He talks wrong with his technique, it's sound common sense and can give Ramprakash a perspective on his the big occasion, and it does dilemma. But, ultimately, cricket is get to you sometimes. It's a mind game. It took one of Engobviously happening to him at land's classiest middle-order batsthe moment so he has to go men, Dennis Amiss, a while before he justified his Test selection. He in there and be natural, play the same way at Test level as scored just one fifty in his first dozen he does at county level. Everybody says you've got to change Tests, but then went on to score 11 hundreds, nine of them 150 or your technique and do more, and finished with an average different things, and you listen to people, but in the end of 46, marking him out as a player of the highest calibre. you have to come back to what you do naturally."

Amiss, now chief executive of allconquering Warwickshire, says: "I think some players, and maybe I was one of those, wonder whether they are going to make it at the highest level because of the run of low scores early in their Test career. You wonder if you are ever going to

"My advice to Mark is still to be- sex would play Ramps if he lieve in his technique. I have seen had a poor run of form. That's long and successful Test career



how he'd get through it, like have not been an easy ride

port from the coaches and the management that's all." Ramprakash made his debut against the West Indies in 1991. He played in all five Tests and proved he could

we all do. It's the only way. I since he has faced the West Inthink he just needs a bit of supdies on 11 occasions.

Gatting's advice, while being sensible, needs the England selectors' concurrence and Micky Stewart, the former national team manager, is brutally

cruel game, isn't if? At all

times you have to select the

side which you think is the best

side to win the match. If they

felt that that didn't include

3,612 1,144 3,848 397 2,487 533 262° 81 207 64 178 38.09 18.90

ly more pugnacious advice to get out of what is perceived to stick around, but he could not be a run of poor form. "The get runs. His first half-century Australia at The Oval and his second 10 months ago, again against Australia. The first 17 matches of what should be a ies on 11 occasions.

a stunning Championship sea-The problem for him is that son as Middlesex finished runners-up. He rattled up more than 2,000 runs with the help of 10 centuries (three of them double hundreds) for an

average of 93.34. Gatting says: "Ramps wanted to bat at three and he took on the responsibility marvellously well. He was quite brilliant. You don't become a crap cricketer overnight, he just needs an occasional bit of back. And England have shown a lot of faith in other players in the past." One of those other players is the Zimbahwe born Graeme Hick, who made his debut in the same Headingley Test as Ramprakash. Like Ramp-

rakash, Hick had a lean start,

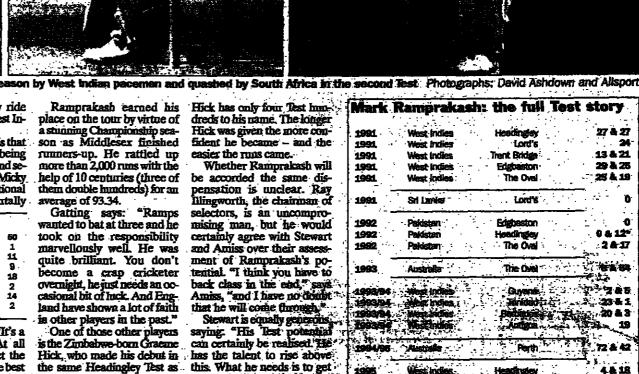
two half-centuries in his first 13

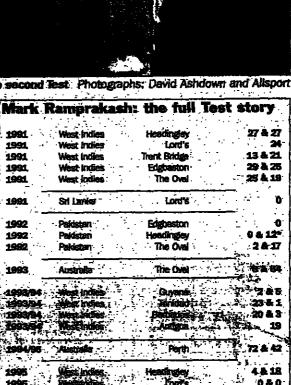
Ramprakash earned his Hick has only four Test hunplace on the tour by virtue of dreds to his name. The longer Hick was given the more confident he became - and the easier the mas came.

Whether Ramprakash wili be accorded the same dispensation is unclear. Ray lingworth, the chairman of selectors, is an uncompromising man, but he would certainly agree with Stewart and Amiss over their assessment of Ramprakash's po-tential. "I think you have to back class in the end," says.

Amiss, "and I have no denot
that he will come through."

this. What he needs is to get





## Your will could help the fight against diabetes

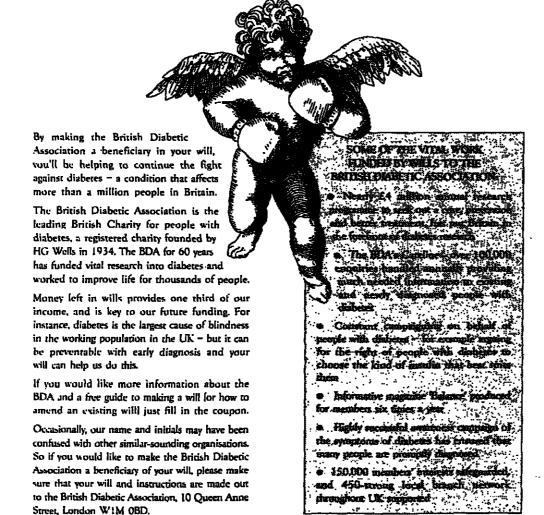
Gatting has similar, if slight-

only way you can get out of it

is by battling through," ex-

plains the 38-year-old Gatting,

by actually playing. Middle-



### BRITISH DIABETIC ASSOCIATION

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Name	 

## Tests 4 (1988-94); runs 87; Tests 9 (1973-76); runs 244; Tests 2 (1993); runs 78; Tests 2; runs 7; average Tests 30 (1980-84); average 10.88; HS 35. average 15.25; HS 106\*. average 19.50; HS 33. 1.75; HS 6. 1,753; average 33.07; HS average 10.88; HS 35. In the search to a wide tikes part in the search to a wide tike part in the search to a wide tike part in the search to a wide tikes part in the search to a wide tike part in the search to a wide tikes part in the search to a wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the first lest in the search to a wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search to a wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the first lest in the search tora wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide tike. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide texts. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide text. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide texts. Blakey fitted the Texts against the West indies in the search tora wide

FIVE OTHERS WHO HAVE STRUGGLED IN THE BIG TIME

Becke

illiards offers to

## Moore means less for his rivals

deemably poignant about his for-tunes this season, or more particularly since his auto-biography explained why he had

changed his mind about retiring. For a variety of personal reasons, England's most-capped hooker had reluctantly resolved that the 1995 World Cup would be his swan-song but then circumstances changed and a chat with Jack Rowell, the England manager, persuaded Moore that he still had an international role to play.

How wrong can you be. It is powerful stuff, as powerful stuff, as power-(Partridge Press, £16.99) takes its leave of Moore on this optimistic note. Yet, whatever Rowell may have said to him (and presumably there can have been no guarantee) he is already out of the England squad and even - if you look at the way Harlequins' rota has been rotated between Moore and Simon Mitchell - second

That said, this is a fitting epitaph for an exceptional career, or one might even say an exceptional life if that did not sound too doom-struck. Moore may not have been everyone's idea of an ambassador for English rugby, or at least not every Rugby Football Union committee man's, but he has been a shining example of honesty and telling it - however un-palatable - like it is.

This has not always been appropriate, there being a time for reticence as well as for outfor reticence as well as for out-spokenness but far be it for a At The Centre (Pavilion, £16.99) Bread Of Heaven (Mainstream, should therefore commend him

Brian Moore would be the last person to wish for sympathy but there has been something irreat this year's best rugby union hardbacks at this year's best rugby union hardbacks

> telligence and determination. Rugby autobiographies by their nature are anodyne and unsatisfactory but not Moore's: for

the reader, there is an uncombackground, the breakdown of or mischievous opinions, a his marriage and the search for Books for Christmas cent bloke. his real mother.

of Moore's personality. It has been an autumn of autobiography. Gary Jeuan Evans, Jeremy Guscott.

even Mike Catt, who seems to Andrew, whatever his qualities as have been around for all of two minutes - have had a go, and Rob Andrew and Gavin Hastings have gone from hardback to soft. They may make easy Christmas presents but revelatory, by design, they are not especially when compared with Moore's.

As the estimable Stephen Jones ghost-wrote on behalf of both Moore and Guscott this is Jethart's Here (Mainstream, the most obvious comparison and both subjects benefited im-mensely from the sagacity and literary style of one of our finest us he can't stand him. You won't would have seemed one of the more refreshingly candid ef-

field as an adopted child who

The best part of this book is
made it in rugby and in life
Guscott's description of how he,
through the force of his own intably included David Trick, the former England wing, turned himself from a schoolboy semidelinquent with a chip on his shoulder and a big head into one fortably voyeuristic fascination as of the great centres and also, our anti-hero delves into his contrary to some misinformed contrary to some misinformed

> But the more publicised section detailing his views of Rob blown out of all proportion at the time of the book's publication and is in fact no more than a statement of the

obvious: that 2 steady, ultra-reliable international stand-off, was never in Stuart Barnes's class either as an individual or as a instigator of attacking threequarter play.

The rest of the auto-biographies all suffer the fate of being published around the same time as Moore's, though Brian might like to know that in £14.99), with Derek Douglas, Armstrong, a Scot with an attitude towards the English, tells £14.99), with Peter Jackson, though the depths to which and his achievements off the forts had it not been for Moore. Wales sank on their tours of New

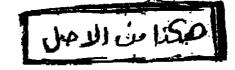
in 1991 are honestly detailed. Away from personalities, the irrepressible Stuart Barnes is in danger of suffering writer's cramp. Having produced his autobiography last year, this year he has edited an anthology of rugby writing, launched a

rugby magazine and written The Year Of Living Dangerously (Richard Cohen, £15.99). Barnes has chronicled the year up to and including the '95 World Cup and given it extra spice with his own idiosyncratic asperity and rather fewer French philosophers than appeared in his previous book. All three of rugby union's World Cups are Derek Wyatt's subject in Rugby DisUnion (Victor Gollancz, £16.99) and if Wyatt, capped as a replacement wing for England in 1976, is here riding long-running per-sonal hobby-horses, the fact that he has something contentious to say gives his book precious credibility. Just like Brian Moore, in fact.

Also recommended (sort of):

ALSO recommended (sort of):

RECOMMENDED: The AV Write: The Life And
Three of Swanzer RFC by David Farmer (OPPS,
CLB.55). The Save & Proper Rughy Linkon Who's
Who 1995/96 edited by Alex Surik (Colleviallow, 519.9). Rothman Rughy Linkon Yearhook
1995-96 edited by Alex Surik (Colleviallow, 519.9). Rothman Rughy Linkon Yearhook
1995-96 edited by Mick Cleary and John Orffishe (Headine, £15.99).
Also availables: Carling's Men by Mick Cleary
(Malkerted & Noolson, £12.99). Rughy: A Rayer's Guide To The Larse by Deric Rothman
(CollinsWillow, £5.99). The Complete Book Of
The Rughy World Op 1995 edited by Ingel
Stammer-Smith and ten Robertson (Lammer Queen
Armer Grand Samb by Mick Call and Laconal Sea
(Malaestream, £16.99). Dearn by Dean Richards
with Peter Bills (Micho Collemn, £16.99). My
Finounite Rughy Stories by Gureth Chilosot with
Les Scott (Sirno & Chiusser, £12.90). The Headbook of Rughy by Keith Miles Freihen, £18.99.
Rughy Armusi For Wales 1995-96 (Weish
Brewers, £5.45). Courage Official Rughy Union
Directory 1995-96 (IW Publications, £13.99).
Pagerbactor: A Geree And A Helf by Rus
Andrew with Crus Res (Coronet, £13.99). High
Balls And Hoppy Hours by Genet Heatings with
Clear Thomas (Meinstream, £9.90).



# Injuries force Blackburn to call up reserves

PHIL SHAW

The backbone of Blackburn's Pontin's League team will: tonight be asked to achieve what the club's Premiership-winning side signally have failed to do -

win a Champions' League game. For their European Cup swan-song, at home to Rosenborg Trondheim, Blackburn will be without at least nine squad members. Colin Hendry, David

Batty and Graeme Le Saux are Marlon Broomes in line to face the opening day of the season all suspended after the Moscraw the Norwegians. Marker, forfiasco: Lars Bohinen, Billy McKiniay, Graham Fenton and Niklas Gudmundsson are ineligible; while Chris Sutton has joined long-term casualties lan Pearce and Jason Wilcox on the list of walking wounded.

A further two of the players who opened Blackburn's illstarred Group B campaign, Lee Makel and Mark Atkins, have left, leaving defenders Nicky Marker, Adam Reed and

merly of Plymouth, has limited first-team experience. Reed, a £200,000 buy from Darlington, and Broomes, a graduate of the FA National School, have not

yet had that dubious pleasure. Paul Warhurst, the defenderturned-striker whom Ray Harford has tended to use in midfield, is likely to revert to the back four. Another fringe player, Kevin Galiacher, is expecter described as a "torrid time" with injuries.

With a record of one point and one goal (by Mike Newell in Trondheim) in five games, Harford showed masterly understatement yesterday when he said: "We haven't done as well as we would have hoped. But I believe everyone at the club is a little wiser for the experience. You have to learn as you go along if you don't you're a fool."

Blackburn's principal folly. apart from aberrations such as the Batty-Le Saux punch-up, has been a lack of tactical flexibility. Resemborg offer a more "British" approach than Spartak Moscow or Legia Warsaw, but Harford would not have used the match to experiment anyway. "Despite

he changing the system." he said. In contrast, Rangers, who have also been eliminated, will be at virtually full strength for their

our selection problems, we won't

Scottish champions found tem-peratures of -3C and flurries of snow on landing in Germany. though it is the Bundesliga leaders who seem to be under the weather. Matthias Sammer (bronchitis) and Julio Cesar (flu) may have to sit out the game with the suspended Jürgen Kohler.

Unlike his Blackburn counterpart, the Rangers manager. Walter Smith, can reasonably expect to be back in the European Cup next autumn. He is

Gascoigne. Richard Gough, Stuart McCall and John Brown each avoids the vellow card that would make the offender unavailable for the first match of the 1996-97 competition.

Three places in the last eight are still up for grabs. Bobby Rob-son, coach to Porto, could maintain a modicum of English interest, although in order to qualify, his team must overcome Sepp Piontek's Aalborg in Den-mark and hope that Nantes lose against Panathinaikos.

## **Prost in** technical boost to McLaren

Motor racing

Alain Prost, four times world champion, ruled out a return to grand prix driving yesterday as he started a new job as a technical consultant with McLaran.

The 40-year-old Frenchman turned up at the Jerez test track in southern Spain, but soon made it clear his racing days were behind him. It had been thought that he might step in for McLaren - with whom he won three of his four world titles - it Finland's Mika Häkkinen failed to make a full recovery from the head injuries he suffered in practice for the Australian Grand Prix in Adelaide last month.

"That is all in the past," he said. "I now have a new role, a new job and I just hope that Mika will be OK for the first race. It is not really a question for me. However, Prost made it clear he relished the opportunity of trying to help McLaren revive their glory days after two seasons without a victory when the new season starts in Australia on 10 March.

"My new role will be more than fest-driving the car." he said. "I will be evaluating the car, because when I speak to the drivers I want to know what they are talking about. I hope it is going to be an advantage for McLaren. I am not here to test the car this time. I don't know when I will test again, but that is something I will have to discuss with the team.

"I am here first of all to see what is going on, to meet the ship with David Coulthard. That is the most important thing for me."

### Hamed's shot at McCullough Boxing

Naseem Hamed vesterday described Wayne McCullough the Irish fighter who has won the World Boxing Council hamtamweight title as well as an Olympic silver medal – as "not even a fourth division fighter".

And Hamed may get the chance to say it to McCullous first hand on 16 March, if he fights on the Mike Tyson-Frank Bruno WBC heavyweight title card in Las Vegas, the Ulsterman's adopted home town. But before this Hamed must dispose of the Mexican. Amulio Castillo, in the first defence of his World Boxing Organisation featherweight title at the Lon-

don Arena on February 10. McCullough said Hamed was "scared" to fight him at bantamweight after his eighth-round stoppage of the Dane Johnny Bredahl in Belfast on Saturday. Hamed, who is recovering from a fracture to his right



hand, said: "He's not even a fourth division fighter. He's

195

The record number of countries who have confirmed that Olympics in Atlanta next summer. The previous highest was 169 set at the 1992 Barcelona Games.



Happy return: Boris Becker plays the ball back to France's Cedric Pioline during his 6-1, 6-7, 9-7 victory in the Grand Slam Cup in Munich yesterday

## Becker struggles through as top seeds fall

TATO 7

With top 10 players tumbling out in rapid succession from the of the Grand Slam Cup in Munich by outlasting the Frenchman Cedric Pioline. Becker first-round losers here. easily won the first set but then had to battle hard to win 6-1, 6-

vices again to help settle the dis-

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS' LEARNE GROUP A

megan.
PEDESCRIPN BREWERY MORCHERN LEAGUE
Frant Dictations. Shirigham Synthoria v Writchhams
Epointon CW & West Austrant, Freinall v Tow LowLife Pike. League Cap thank mange Duthalm Cay.

cricket officials.

Football

earning at least \$250,000 winner Michael Stich, who are (£160,000), Thomas Muster both injured. No 3) and Michael Chang (No were eliminated.

Muster, the French Open richest tournament in the world champion, at least went home yesterday, Boris Becker \$350,000 richer - a \$250,000 squeezed into the quarter-finals bonus for winning one of the Grand Slam eyents of the season, plus \$100,000 given to all The Zimbabwean Byron

Black, ranked No 40 in the world, beat Muster 7-6, 2-6, 6-1. While Becker, ranked No. 4 Black, like Pioline qualified in the world, advanced to the only after the withdrawal of last eight and made sure of Andre Agassi and the 1992

Richards offers to mediate in Lara dispute

Viv Richards has come to his country's rescue once or twice for misconduct during this pick up the phone," Richards, and the second bin are

Brian Lara and the West Indies the affair that, here and now, of Australia apparently because

Lara pulled out of the current tempt to get a batsman better for an incident he was led to betour of Australia at the last than I ever was, back on track lieve had been settled by the tour minute after being fined, with to help West Indies mount a secommittee in England.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

MENISON EASTERN LEAGUE Promier Division: Policytropy y Correct.

Pejastové v Cornerd.

NOETH WEST COUNTRES LENGUE First Division:
Nameiotr v Kutejrove; Prestot v Skehmendele;
Ressendale v Newcastle Town (7.45).

(7.45); Ébber Vate v Ton Pienre; Lorney v Lonnet's Quey.

CHLOR, GOUNTY ANTIBER SHEELD Second 
round: Artis v Crusaders; Calact Rangers v Porpolitions, Geographic Basinships; Lands V Bentider, 
POMFINE LEARNER; Finet Detector: Lends Und v 
Manachester Int (7.0); Coldinan v Detty (7.0). Secned Obstaker: Asson Wills, v Librasier (7.0); 
Barnsky v Bunderland (7.0); Bascapon v Andidesbrough (7.0), Charl Detector: Bary v Dominister 
(7.0); Califale v Missal (7.0); Chesan v Virochem 
(7.0); Califale v Missal (7.0); Chesan v Virochem 
(7.0); Defington v Scarrinorus); (3.5); Sevenbusy v Stackpon (7.0); Wigen v Sourishope (7.0), 
ANDER 1655IRANCE CINETRIANOM Finet Detelor.

Relation v Semindin (2.0); Toward and v Srinze Cay

ANDER PASSIFIANCE CIDERINATION First Distance. Brighton V Sandon (2.01; Tournham V Shatti Cap. (a) St Affant Chir. Cardison V Milesel (7.0); Crystel Pataco V Curoch's Park Ranges (7.0) for Dustance Hornico); Ipanich V Cheixes et Ray Touri, show y Parks Rosers, Novach V Assemil, Octob Unit V Southern from: Natural V Mindleston: See-ond Distance (2011) (22 V Tourinay) (37 Neymaham Tolera); Cardiff V Sharrens (2.0).

gan v Sountherpe (7-4). INATION First Division.

"I carry no weight with the Indies, said yesterday.

I volunteer to mediate in an at- he was upset at being penalised

Regby Union

Rugby League

Basketball :

Other sports

before and has offered his ser-year's tour of England.

pute between the batsman board, but I am so dismayed by

Jacco Eltingh, a Dutch doubles specialist who is ranked No 43, beat Chang 7-6, 6-3, with an aggressive game on the fast carpet surface. The tournament invites 16

players with the best records in the four Grand Slam events in a year - the Australian, French and US Opens and Wimbledon - and the winner will receive \$1.625m. It is played under Grand Slam rules, which means there is no tie-break in

the former captain of West

PIVE NATIONS (SEPERATION CUP Pool C: Lenster y Perspridd (7.15), at Lensdowne Road. Dublini. TERNEDN'TS SHIER DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP-SACOSIS Edition y Comburgh District (5.0) (at Rich-month). Roint and Matterds. y Changow District (7.0) (at Rich-dl Richards).

RACING: LingSeto (all weather flat) (1-10); Leines tor (1-0); Sedgefield (12-50).

Lara withdrew from the tour

Becker, a three-times Wimbledon champion who won the ATP World Championship in Frankfurt last month, easily won the first set against Pioline. But Pioline picked up his game in the second set and clinched

the tie-break. Becker wasted two break points in the 11th game of the third set, but he still managed forehand passing shot down

to break for 8-7 with a brilliant After two successive aces, Becker had earned three

American football

match points. Pioline saved

Annew reason trootupasis
Injury is forcing Charles Haley, of the Dallas Cowboys, to reture. He was unable
to continue after half-time in the Cowboys' 24-17 loss to the Weshington Recstars, because of lower back, pain
caused by a uptured disc. Haley was
embed out of retirement after last season with a \$3m signing-on bonus, and
half of that counts against the team's
calany and for the 1996 season whether

salary cap for the 1996 season whethe or not Haley ever plays again.

of not raisey even pages again.

Herman Moore set a franchise record with 14 catches for 183 yards as the Detroit Lions beat the Chicago Bears 27-7 on Monday right.

Khalid Skah, the Olympic 10,000 me-tres champion, yesterday pulled out of the Durham cross-country internation

al on 30 December, The Moroccan has decided to concentrate on altitude train-

ing for his detence of the title in Atlanta

National Basketball Association refer-

ees ratified a contract proposal on Mon-

ees ratified a contract proposal on with day from the teague ending a lock-out imposed by owners since before the sea-son began. The referees ratified a five-year contract that provides an 18.7 per

cent salary increase in the first year and 60 per cent over the duration of the deal.

NFL: Detroit 27 Chicago 7. MATIONAL POOTBALL CONFERENCE CENTRAL DIVISION

**Athletics** 

one, but the German blasted on his left foot and a tight hip his 14th ace to finish the match. The outcome resembled Becker's quarter-final victory over Pioline at Wimbledon this year, where he squandered a two-set

lead and then won 9-7 in the

fifth. "I played the first set like a world champion, but then he found his timing, he began to serve well and it became close," said Becker, who was cheered by a sell-out crowd of 11,000 in the city where he now lives when he is in Germany. Muster was slowed by blisters

Rain forced the abandonment of the tourng West indies' first Australian match

yesterday, against the Prime Minister's XI, in Canberra.

The injured pace bowlers Fanie de Vil-liers and Brett Schultz have been left out of South Africa's provisional World

Cup squad. Also omitted from the list

for the tournament starting on 25 Feb-mary in India, Pakistan and Sn Lanka

were the bowlers Clive Exsteen and Meynck Pringle, who played in the sec-ond Test against England.

ond lest against Erigenta.

South Arabica Provisional, World Clip
Squad: W J Crone Icad), A C Hudson, G
Nissen, D J Cafinari, J N Rhodes, B M McMittan, D J Remardson, S M Pobock, C P
Matthews, A A Donaid, P Afansa, O N Crodius,
N Boye, P Symcos, S C Paffanan, I. Nusener,
A P Kuiper, R P Snell, J H Kalls, P J R Sleyn.

face and the balls were too fast. Black is the first beneficiary of the Grand Slam Develop-

ment Fund to play at the tour-nament. The Grand Slam Cup pays \$2m annually to the fund that helps young players and the game worldwide Black was helped by the fund, which paid for him to travel to junior tournaments,

work with a coach and attend a tennis academy. They have really helped me and guided me in my game, he said.

Srt. Dec. R Van Der Laan (Dechy) 2 malches from Sto Dec.

MONDAY'S LATE RESILTS: FA Corling Preplansing: Sreffset Wednescay J Coverny 3. FA 
Umbro Trapby third qualifying round occord 
replay assop septiand 3 Witton Albon 1 Rehcy Austica's away in Brangstove Revers. Beasare Homes: Laugus Dr. Martens. Cup second 
rounts' in Decisir 3 Southoring 0. Res Laugus 
Guardian Insurance Cup second-round registy: 
Russle Laran 2 Basingshoe Town 3. Humillood 
Laugus: AS metales bostoneet. Great Mills. 
Laugus Promier Division: Vaurion Town 2 
Pa-3co: Rover. 1. Postins Luaque First Division: 1 Levicacite Ltd. 4 West Beymmith 0 (b) 
Gants'secul, Tranmer Powers 3 Emmingham Cey 
2: "South South 1 (c) Tellard Utid). Second 
Detainer Martischel Town 3 Bradings (dy 9 Postpomet Gerichy v Vol. Augn Insurance Combination First Division: Crokses 1 Outhou Util
1 K Krigstonian. FA Youth Cop Second round: 
1 K Krigstonian. FA Youth Cop Second round: 1 fat Krigstorkey, FA Youth Cop Second round: Lees Ust 0 Maddestrough 1: Galactism 1 Wei-ing 3, 5: Water Cop 2 Banstead Athless 1; Ingwich Josef 0 Water 0.

AEWHA FOURTH-ROUND CUP DRAW (3 Norch 1996): Socam Leoeser v Old Lougimnains, Bro-soume v Coon; Cornosser v Highrown; Erne-V Coy of Portsmouth; Harleston Magnes v Com-

ice hockey MML: NY Rengers 5 Anshern 1. eastern Conference Northeast Division

Fresh from anchoring Amer-ica to victory over Russia in the

Davis Cup final in Moscow

Sampras, the Wimbledon and

US Open champion, begins his

campaign here today against

a fellow American Patrick

Martin, who helped Sampras

win the key Davis Cup doubles

on Sunday, plays Sergi Bruguera, Andrei Medvedev

meets Aaron Krickstein while

Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

Renzo Furlan will be up against

In other matches today, Todd

McEnroe.

PACIFIC DIVISION

Olympics

Snowboarding was yesterday approved as an Olympic event by the International Olympic Committee at their executive board meeting in Karutzawa, Japan. The decision brings to 68 the number of events to be held at the Nagano Winter Games in 1998. Other new events will be women's ice hockey and curling.

**Rugby Union** Philippe Benetton, the French flanker.

is out of this season's Five Nations' Championship after breaking his right arm for the second time this year. Richard Cockerill, the Lebester and England A hooker, will make his first CIS Divisional Championship appearance of the season for Midlands in Saturday's decider against the North at Beeston. Cookenil replaces Northampton's Tim Beddow and plays in a strong front row alongside the Under-21 props, Matti Vol-land and Nathan Webber.

GERBAN OPEN (Frankfurt) First round; K Do-hetty (fit of O Reyhold: Engl 5-3; J Partot; Engl Et M Clark (Engl 5-2; D Morgan (Not) bit 8 Smo-don (Seo) 5-4; J Hogens (Soo) bit C Small (Soo) 5-2; S Hendry (Soo) bit J Swal (N In) 5-2; N Bond (Engl bit W Homes (Engl 5-0; P Ebdon (Engl bit Y Morchard (Ind) 5-2.

Swimming The International Olympic Committee yesterday said the new four-year sus-pension on doping offenders, adopted by the International Swimming Feder-

ation (FINA) last week, was too still, IOC board member, Richard Pound of Canada, said: "We must give penalties but they must not be so severe for an attr-lete to be virtually banned from taking part in future events". At a congress in the two-year suspension of those found to have used anabolic steroids.

Clare Wood, the British No 1, reached the second round of the Challenger event in Paris yesterday, beating Christina Pa-padaki of Greece 7-6 6-4. patient of Greece 7-6 o-6.

Grant D Stand CUP (Momich) First round:

B Black (2m) bt T Muster (Aut) 7-6.2-6.

6-1: B Bocker (Ger) bt C Pointe (Fr) 6-1.

6-7.9-7. J Etingh (Neth) bt M Chang, (US) 7-6.6-3.

PACLE Third-round draw: Saturaby 6 January (2.0); Crews v West Bromanch; Ressing - Gillingham; Iranmiers v Outcer's Pork Ranges. Norwach v Brandont; Lebester v Manchester Coy. Condentant or Gramesena & Northbeet v Aston villa; Crystal Pelace v Port Vale; Stoke v Roung; ham Forest; Swindan v Emieed or Wolang; Bandond v Boken; Huddersfield v Blackpoot; Primodin v Coverny; Grandon v Emieed or Wolang; Bendond v Boken; Huddersfield v Blackpoot; Primodin v Coverny; Grandon v Blackpoot; Primodin v Coverny; Grandon v Walnes, Peleboorugh v Wesham; Barnsiey v Gidzam; West Hann v Soument; Tomany or Walnes; v Gidzam; West Hann v Soument; Tomany or Walnes; v Gidzam; West Hann v Schement; Destropen the Statistical Voctoriham; Aspend v Sheffield Uta; Futnam or Brytion v Schemeng or Destropen; Wadond v Wirnheldon, Sunday 7 January; Everton v Standon; Cu.O.; Derby v Leeds (1.0); Alex or Sly Sports; Cheboa v Hencastile (3.0).
Prepaseersidik AND FREST Division Sussession; Sendings off: W Bohami Covertry; 1 match from 100 Der; P Williams (Covertry; 1 match from 5th Der; S West (Coverny; 1 match from 7th Der; I Bending (Wandhester Cry; 1 match from 7th Der; I Bending (Wandhester Cry; 1 match from 7th Der; I Bending (Wandhester Cry; 1 match from 7th NBA: Boston 121 Marts 120 (50; Derwe; 85 Detroit 82.



### WHAT IS IT ABOUT MARK RAMPRAKASH?

Why does the most talented English batsman of his generation play like a complete novice when he steps into the international arena?

# Venables sticks to England's winning formula

Football Correspondent

Terry Venables yesterday enjoyed the rare pleasure of being able to name a virtually unchanged

and unchallenged squad. After the impressive 3-1 win over Switzerland last month the England coach made just one change for next Tuesday's friendly against Portugal at Wembley. Even that was enforced. Gary Pallister, who has a back injury, drops out while Nick Barmby, who missed the last match with

his 15-match reign, and the more possession becomes nine-first for 14 months, that Venables has not named a new face in his squad. With the European Championship finals now less than seven months away that

ning out of time for a recall.

"You've always got to cater
for someone coming through
like a stream train," said Venables, who may take his team to South Africa for two warm-up games in late May. "But the

It is only the second time in nearer you get [to the finals] the

In Pallister's absence Gareth Southgate is likely to at least make his first appearance on the substitutes' bench. After Tony will be bad news for the likes of Adams and Steve Howey, who Robbie Fowler and Mark Drap- are expected to resume a parter, but even worse for Paul Ince and Paul Merson who are run-against Colombia in September, he is the only central defender in the party. It is Southgate's third appearance in the squad but the Aston Villa defender has yet to figure in a final 16.

The only other uncapped player in the squad is Trevor Sin-



**England squad** 

clair but Queen's Park Rangers' poor recent form, Steve Stone's excellent match against the Swiss and the return of Barmby, all reduce his chances of a first start. Graeme Le Saux and David Platt, who were included in the

squad but not judged fit enough to play last month, will both await the final XI with amoiety. Le Saux is Venables' first choice left-back but he will be acutely aware that his Moscow punchup with David Batty has tarmeanwhile, has struggled to recapture his form with Arsenai, despite scoring on Saturday.

Les Ferdinand, who took his season's domestic goal tally to 20 on Sunday, is playing so well he must get an international chance soon. But with Alan Shearer, who scored a hat-trick on Saturday, and Teddy Sheringham linking impressively against Switzerland he may be

There is, however, a full weekend football programme to be negotiated first. The chances of the entire squad coming

nished his reputation. Platt, through unscathed is slim. It is with this mind that Venables has than the last time they met named a 23-man party, his largest yet. The group includes Ian Walker, called up as cover last month, and Jamie Red-knapp, who has not played since injuring a hamstring after five minutes against Switzerland

The weekend matches, and the Tuesday kick-off (to avoid the following night's European Championships play-off be-tween the Republic of Ireland and the Netherlands) means Venables will have just two days England, in Mexico, during the 1986 World Cup. Portugal won 1-0 but, unlike England, failed

to qualify for the quarter-finals. The Irish will testify to the strength of an impressive youth system whose graduates form the basis of a side who will be among the dark horses for next

A recurrence of an ankle injury has forced David Kelly, the Sunderland striker, to withdraw from the Republic of with his team. This makes a test- Ireland squad to play the ing fixture even more difficult. Netherlands at Anfield.

## Ferguson kept waiting for court hearing

Duncan Ferguson's hopes of a clearance to play this week be-came enmeshed in legal red tape yesterday. Nevertheless, the Everton striker still hopes to make his comeback tomor-

row night.
The Scottish courts delayed yesterday's hearing into his 12games of which have still to be served - until this morning because of a shortage of time, but Everton are so confident of success they have arranged a reserve game against Newcastle.

His manager, Joe Royle, will almost certainly play him in the Pontins League match at Goodison, saying: "If all goes well it club. Glasgow's Procurator will be a chance to give him match practice. We are very grateful to Kevin Keegan for helping us out at short notice."

Ferguson had the suspension imposed by the Scottish Football Association after an incident in 1994 when the then Wilkins, who signed the 24-year-Rangers player head-butted old Australian international for

Raith Rovers' John McStay. He also served 44 days of a three-month sentence in prison as a result of that assault and

Everton are arguing it is unfair for him to be punished twice. They expect the courts to fix a date for the full judicial review and freeze the suspension until then. That would probably take place early in the new year, freeing Ferguson for selection.

While Ferguson must wait, the Aberdeen captain, Stewart McKinnie, learned yesterday that he will not face prosecution after a police investigation into an incident with Partick Thistle's Callum Milne on Saturday.

McKimmie was sent off after allegedly elbowing Milne and has since been fined by his Fiscal, however, intends to take no further action.

Ned Zelic is heading back to Germany after just four months with Queen's Park Rangers, who are negotiating a £1m deal with Eintracht Frankfurt. Ray

## **Juventus blown off** course by weather

Juventus, who were on their way journey by taking the train, but to Bucharest for their Cham- the Romanian railways were pions' League match against also disrupted by snow. Steaua Bucharest, found themselves on a mystery tour taking tacted Uefa in the afternoon in Sofia before bad weather from Sofia and received apforced them back to Turin proval to return home. yesterday.

Assuming Juventus can reach day if the airport reopens and their desired destination today the game would be played tothe game will take place morrow. If not, the game will be tomorrow.

The charter plane from Turin to Bucharest could not land at Bucharest's Otopeni airport be-chance of qualifying because Bucharest's Otopeni airport because of 50mph winds and snow. Juventus and Borussia Dort-It diverted to Sofia, 300 miles mund have already clinched south of Bucharest. The team the two quarter-final places contemplated completing the from the group.

The Italian champions con-

Juventus are due to return to-

played next Wednesday. Steaua, who won the EuroBorussia Dortmund, said: "From the day he arrived Ned has not been happy and found

it impossible to settle." Bolton completed the £750,000 purchase of Newcastle's Scott Sellars vesterday and he is expected to make his debut in the Premiership home match against Liverpool on Saturday.

Rounie Ekelund yesterday went from Barcelona to Barrowin-Furness when he finally arrived to start a loan spell with Birmingham City. The Danish international midfielder, valued at £350,000, was pitched straight into a testimonial match in the Cumbrian outpost.

Wimbledon may face Fifa opposition to their plan of a move to Dublin. The club's owner, Sam Hammam, says he is considering a relocation to the Irish capital, but was reined in yesterday by the

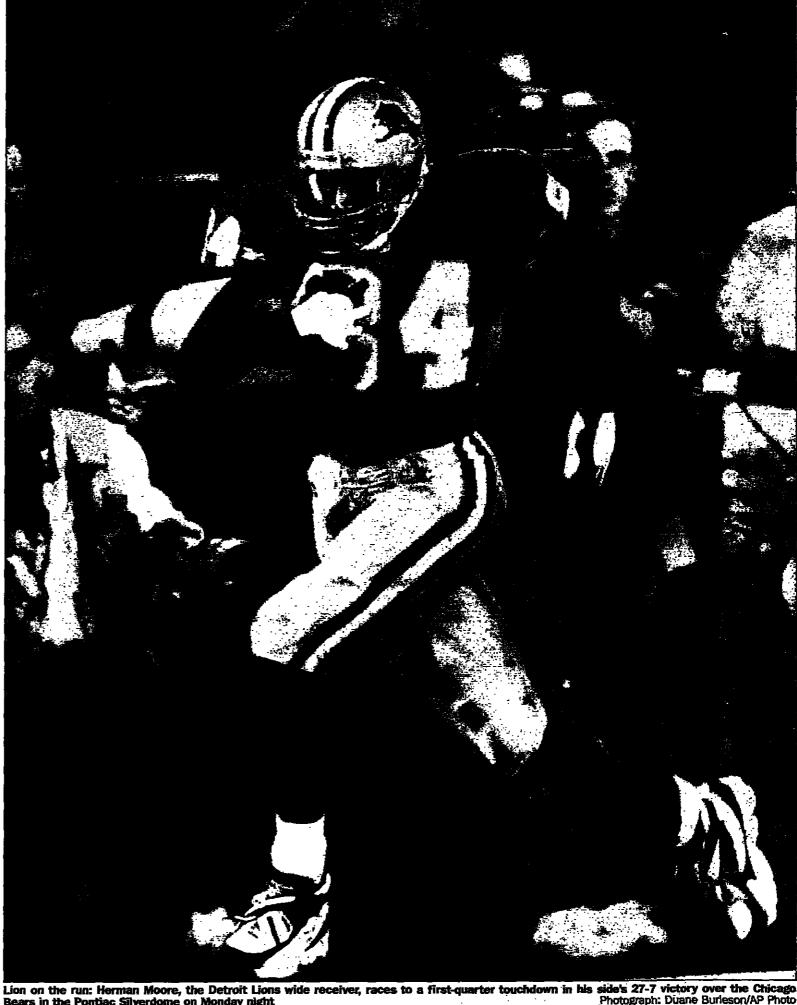
game's governing body.

Keith Cooper, a Fifa
spokesman, said: "Wimbledon couldn't go ahead until we gave our agreement. On what we have learned there would appear to be no compelling reasons of a humanitarian or security nature for the move. We would be concerned on grounds of precedent and continuity."

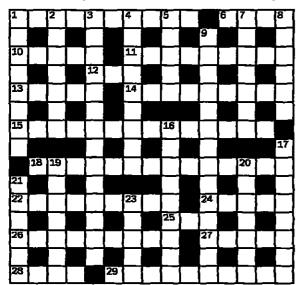
So far Hammam has failed to back his words with action. The Premier League and the Football Association have not been approached officially and there is a suspicion Hammam may be bluffing to get Merton council to drop tance to the sale of Wimbledon's old Plough Lane bome and relocation within the borough.

Four FA Cup third-round ties have been put back 24 hours to 7 January: Everton v Stockport (3pm), Ďerby v Leeds (1pm, Sky), Chelsea v Newcastle (3pm BBC) and Southampton v Portsmouth (3pm). Allan McGraw, the Morton

manager, was comfortable and stable in hospital last night after suffering a heart attack.



## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



- 1 One-metre triangular table can be obstacle (10) 25 Duck-eggs in cricket Boss of Animal Farm? (4) 10 Fats Waller without water,
- suffered cataracts (5) 11 Main tempo disturbed is such a farcical situation (9) 12 Evasive sort of general re-
- treats (3)
  13 Odd kind of talk I would Odd kind of talk I would down (4) bring back in Isle of Man 29 Music of people in the six-14 Moderate, pleasant condition of racecourse (4-5)
  15 Bow to the latter plan for
- comfort in retirement (3-18 Diabolical gossip when someone appears, as men-

tremely good pies (9)

- ground, mainly (3) One who defends a game point (9) Beast of burden, in a London avenue, going the wrong way! (5) 28 Great numbers knocked
- ties, flower fashion (6,4) DOWN
- Popular retreat during air јошпеу (2-6) For him the game is up (7) Ambitions Drake nurtured for leaving The Golden Hind? (14) National Emblem of
- Poles embracing person on the seventh of March, for example (5) Six in test is commonplace
- 8 To bring up material from bed, doctor has slight advantage (6)

  9 Placed lengthways and lingering, Intensive Therapy Unit has row with colleague (14)

  16 Mousters live over border,
- cruelly shot (9) 17 Gratifying entreaties over a bible, in part (8)
  - Polo, for instance (7) 20 Slim and straight, Roman man stands over portal (7) 21 A vessel with trouble below,
  - set about (6) 23 Conduct of good Scottish European (5)

OPublished by Newspaper Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Omary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St. Wednesday & December 1995 Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

changeable colours (5-4)

## Atherton takes it easy after the great escape

Cricket

DEREK PRINGLE reports from Paarl

Naughty boy nets were cancelled when England arrived here yesterday, the team still buoyant after their epic draw in the second Test. But although the official mode of transport was a jet aeroplane, few who were at the Wanderers on Monday would have been surprised had their captain, Michael Atherton, been able to manage the thousand or so miles under his own steam, despite a row-dy night spent celebrating their

great escape. Atherton, who spent much of the flight behind sunglasses, is clearly still basking in the knowledge of a man who knows he has taken more than just a few points off an opponent. By absorbing everything South Africa could throw at him bour upon long hour, he not only drew the scorpion sting from the South African bowlers' tails, he provided his own side, by colossal example, with a potent au-tidote to losing. A disease England have been susceptible to, for some time.

England may never have

been on top in Johannesburg a knock there at one time or anbut, by not losing, they have now gone five Tests without being beaten. It is a feat last achieve in 1991/92, after the West Indies were beaten at The Oval, New Zealand were beaten 2-0 at home and the first Test against Pakistan was drawn.

However, if anything, brave rearguard actions seem to have more of a galvanising effect on the British psyche than victories do. In fact Atherton admitted he often gets more satisfaction from staving off certain defeat than winning, and both he and the team left the high veldt transformed in spirit, if not entirely free from their problems.

The most pressing of these, as it has been for some time, is the No 3 batting spot. Mark Ramprakash, despite possessing an enormous amount of flair at county level, appears to be totally unsuited to Test cricket and the gremlins it lodges in the minds of the unwary. To be bowled twice by half volleys suggest there are forces at play that can only be exorcised from within.

In fact, nobody has made the position anything like their own since David Gower, and although all seven of the front-line batsmen on this tour have had

other, most merely scratched about before casting off the hairshirt and settling for somewhere more comfortable. On pre-Test match form, John Crawley would warrant another chance, though Raymond IIIingworth may just promote Robin Smith, giving Crawley the chance to settle in at six instead.

However, the No 3 spot aside, it will not have escaped the England chairman's attention, that when Atherton does not anchor the innings and supply the steady drip of runs, around which the others can include (as he failed to do in England's first imings) there appears to be no-one who can stop the innings from dis-

appearing down the plughole. Having withstood over 10 ruelling bours of South African bombardment, Atherton deserves a break. But, before he beads for the mountain passes and vine-covered slopes of this scenic area, he may meet one more aggrieved party. Phillip DeFreitas, whom he left out of England's World Cup squad and is likely to be in the Boland side against whom England start a

four-day game here tomorrow. The making of Captain



hold have der ever.

